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FEBRUARY, 1954

THE **Liguorian**

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR LOVERS OF GOOD READING

***Should Your Reading
Be Censored? . p. 65***

***The Real Martin
Luther p. 77***

***Long Engagements p. 71
Kissing Games . p. 76***

\$2.00 per year • \$2.25 Canada and Foreign

VOL. XLII - - - No. 2



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<i>The Liguorian</i> LIGUORI, MO.	
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Two Dollars per year — (Canada and Foreign \$2.25)	

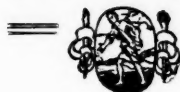
Published Monthly by the Redemptorist Fathers and entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Liguori, Mo., under the act of March 3, 1879. — Acceptance for mailing at special rates of postage provided for in section 1103, act of October 3, 1917. Authorized July 17, 1918. Published with ecclesiastical approval.



February, 1954

THE Liguorian

a magazine for the lovers of good reading



Devoted to the Unchangeable Principles of Truth, Justice, Democracy and Religion, and to All That Brings Happiness to Human Beings

Should Your Reading Be Censored?

This subject is constantly coming up, both in the pseudo-scientific and the popular anti-Catholic literature of the day. Every Catholic and intelligent non-Catholic should know what it is all about.

Donald F. Miller

THE QUESTION in the above title disturbs and even angers many people. It certainly is a stumbling block to many non-Catholics, and the Catholic answer to the question is made into a constantly recurring objection to the Catholic religion by those who feel obliged to write and speak against it.

Thus Paul Blanshard, writer of two recent anti-Catholic books, devoted many pages to hurling accusations of dictatorship and opposition to freedom of research against the Catholic Church because she prohibits Catholics to read certain books. Thus Anglican Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher of England recently supported the statement that the prohibition of certain books represents "bullying" on the part of the Catholic clergy over their people. There has been scarcely a single denunciation of the Catholic Church in recent years that has not offered Catholic censorship and prohibition of books as a major argument against her.

Even Catholics at times feel annoyance and resentment against the idea that their reading should be in any way

censored. Some go so far as sinfully to ignore the rulings that the Church has laid down in this matter, and read anything they have a mind to. Others feel an inclination to apologize for the fact that their Church prohibits certain books, as if they were admitting that this is indeed a black mark against the true religion. And almost every Catholic, prone as all human nature is to resent having to buckle down to obedience, feels at times that he should be trusted by the Church to read anything he pleases.

But there is more to this question than immediately meets the eye. It involves basic truths about human nature, direct teachings of Jesus Christ, and lessons of world-wide experience, that should be considered whenever the question of censorship of books is raised. This is another case of the truth of the saying that has brought many a convert into the Catholic Church: probe deeply enough into any principle or practice of the Catholic religion and you will find that it is intimately bound up with inescapable

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truths concerning God and man and human destiny as a whole.

That this is true in the matter of the censorship and prohibition of certain reading matter by the authority of the Catholic Church may be shown in two ways. First, it can be shown negatively, i.e., by a simple statement about what you must believe about your nature and destiny if you maintain that you should be permitted to read anything. Second, it can be shown positively, i.e., by a statement of the truths about your nature and destiny which demand that some censorship of your reading be accepted.

1.

If you resist and reject any exercise of authority over your reading, you must do so on the basis of one of the three following italicized statements.

a. *There should be absolutely no censorship or prohibitions of reading matter for you, if you are perfect.*

By "being perfect", we here mean perfectly capable of two things, to be taken not separately but together.

The first is that you are perfectly capable of reaching and grasping the truth about any matter that comes to your attention, no matter what false evidence, or misrepresentation of facts, or subtly twisted arguments, are presented to your view.

Are you thus perfect? Would you say that you have never made a mistake of judgment in your life? Have you never had to change an opinion that you once held as if it were not an opinion but an unchangeable truth? Has anybody ever deceived you by false statements and lies? Or would you say that it is impossible for anybody ever to deceive you because you have the power to see at once through every misrepresentation and lie? If you are not thus perfect and if it is impor-

tant at all that you be not deceived through bad reading, you must welcome help in deciding what you should read.

The second thing you must be capable of, if you are perfect in this regard, is that of never finding your mind swayed from the truth, or your will led into evil, by the force of your passions or your prejudices.

Are you thus perfect? Let us say that you know what the virtue of purity is and you desire to be pure. Have you ever found yourself paging through an illustrated sexy booklet, or a pornographic novel, with the result that your passions became much stronger than your knowledge of purity and your desire to be pure?

Or let us say that you are married and you have been a fair Christian. But your marriage has turned out to be very unhappy. You know that Christ said you are married for life, no matter what problems this creates. Now you read a book that presents a glowing and highly emotional case for freedom to divorce a lawful spouse and to marry somebody else. Would you say that your knowledge of Christ's law makes you absolutely immune to even the slightest thought of escaping your unhappy marriage and finding a better partner when you read a glowing defense of such conduct?

Now even these two imperfections, that of being prone to be swayed by false evidence and arguments, and that of being swept away by your passions from adhering to truth, would not matter too much if they affected you only in unimportant affairs. It will not hurt you too much, in a practical sense, if you are deceived into holding that the earth is flat instead of round, or that the moon is made of cheese. But it will hurt you eternally if you are deceived or driven by your passions into

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maintaining errors about your soul, about God, about heaven and hell, about religion. In these matters you have to have the truth and you have to cling to it and you have to avoid the danger of turning aside from it.

Therefore it stands to reason that, if there is an authority in the world set up by God to lead you to heaven, you must expect and even demand of that authority that it save you from your own weakness and imperfection by guiding your reading in some way.

b. *There should be absolutely no censorship of your reading, if you are hopeless, i.e., incapable of knowing or following the truth about God, your soul, your destiny.*

There are those who hold that it is impossible for any human being to grasp with certainty any truth about God or religion or a moral law. If you are among them, of course you should read anything, because you start out with the principle that you are never going to attain certain truth anyway.

There are others who hold that they (and you) are so totally corrupt and depraved that nothing can stop them (and you) from falling into both error and sin. If you believe that nothing can save you from mistakes and evil, then of course you should submit to no authority that pretends to be able to do so. You should go right ahead and read anything—the most obscene literature and the wildest fantasies of diseased minds, because you are going to be a sinner anyway.

But if your mind rejects the idea that you are totally corrupt, if you believe that there is some hope of your escaping the degradation of evil, if you recognize an authority set up by Christ to help you to keep His commandments, again you must be eager to submit to its guidance in the matter of reading, in which it is so easy for you

to be led astray.

c. *There should be absolutely no censorship of your reading if this world is the only one you have to live for, i.e., if there is no eternity for which you must prepare.*

If you are an out-and-out secularist, you will naturally and bitterly resent any attempt to interfere with your freedom to get as much out of this world as you can. This will hold, not only in the matter of your reading, but in all other things as well. You have to grab as much money, enjoy as much pleasure, and indulge as many inclinations as you possibly can, if you are hastening on your way toward nothingness and oblivion. Nobody is going to get away with telling you that you must not read sexy books, or the writings of other secularists that make you feel safer (though never completely safe) in following your whims, your passions, your inclinations.

But if you are convinced that you have been created to use this world only as a means to winning an eternal destiny of happiness in heaven, and if you believe that God Himself has laid down the rules, and set up an institution in this world to help you keep the rules, you will in no way be offended that God's representative tells you what you should not read if you want to save your soul.

Thus every expression of opposition to any sort of censorship or prohibition of books springs from one of these three false principles: that you are perfect, that you are hopeless, or that you are made for this world alone. Surely you know enough about yourself to reject each of these principles.

2.

But the necessity of some censorship of your reading can be seen still more clearly through reflection on the basic truths of Christianity from which

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it flows. A true Christian is bound to accept these truths; if he denies them, he places himself outside the fold of the followers of Christ. And in accepting them he finds that both his own conscience and the Church that represents Christ in the world are under obligation to preserve him from bad and dangerous reading. The important truths are these.

1. *Your first and supremely important task in life, as made known to you by the Son of God Himself, is to save your immortal soul.*

All other things that interest you in life must be subordinated to that goal: your pleasures and amusements, your work for a living, your relationship with others, your plans and ambitions—all must be brought into line with your first concern for saving your soul. Surely your reading is among these things. If a certain kind of reading can lessen your chance of saving your soul, there must be definite rules laid down and followed concerning that reading.

2. *In trying to save your soul, you are handicapped by the effects of original sin.*

One of the effects of original sin was put into words by God after the sin of your first parents: "In the sweat of your brow you shall eat your bread." This explains why you have to work for a living, and to worry about your job and your income and the necessities of life for yourself and your family.

In so doing, as an average Christian, you do not have the time required to study and analyze and weigh all the various, contradictory, religious ideas presented by different men. It can be admitted that if all human beings had ample time to study all sides of every religious question that might arise, then all who were not influenced by pride or passion would come to grasp

and follow the truth. The mind is like that. Give it all the evidence and all the angles on any problem and it will recognize the truth if passion does not interfere. But, even apart from the influence of passion and pride, you simply do not have the time, if you are working for a living, to make a thorough study of all these things.

But despite your having to work for a living, you still have to save your soul. If God wants you to do that, He must have set up some kind of defense against your endangering your soul's salvation by bad reading. His Church takes care of that by saying to you: If you haven't enough time to read everything, to study the pros and cons of every new doctrine, then make sure of your salvation by spending the little time you have in reading things that will help, not hurt you.

Another effect of original sin is the human tendency in all of us, already referred to, to be influenced by our pride and our passions even when they run counter to our knowledge of the truth. We have in us what led to the fall of Adam and Eve: we want to be independent; we want to be like unto God.

This inclination grows in strength and can become overpowering if a person fires his imagination and excites his senses by reading glowing accounts of the glory of independence, or of the bodily delights of evil. Anybody, for example, who says that he should be permitted to read all the obscene literature he wants to because he knows what is right and wrong, is guilty (and he knows it) of horrible logic. Such reading can sweep him irresistibly into wrong, no matter how firm is his knowledge of what is right.

Again, then, if saving your soul is your most important task, you must be protected in some way from read-

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ing anything that might sweep you into sin and into hell.

3. *The Catholic Church is the official means that Christ set up to help you save your soul, and she has the obligation to make rules in regard to your reading in accord with the above truths.*

Some maintain that, in exercising censorship over the reading of Catholics, the Church interferes with their freedom in an unjustifiable way. Others say that such censorship is unnecessary and therefore objectionable, because the individual's conscience can be depended on to take care of this matter for himself.

The defenders of unlimited freedom are practically without exception those who admit to no definite divine plan or purpose for human life. They want to make freedom the end and goal of human existence. Anyone who accepts the truth that his freedom is to be used to win an everlasting happiness will want that freedom to be limited by any kind of ruling that will keep him on the road to heaven and off the road to hell.

Those who call censorship useless and unnecessary are unmindful of one of the chief purposes of the incarnation of the Son of God. He became man in order, among other things, to reiterate many precepts that men already knew but were neglecting to their own everlasting sorrow. He founded a Church that would continue reiterating these same precepts, with the authority and the grace of God to back them up, on which the salvation of all would depend.

As to the censorship and prohibition of books, it is naive to think that any Christian should be considered capable of walking into a library of a million books and, without aid, of knowing at once what he should and

should not read if he wants to save his soul. Everybody needs help in this matter, and needs it badly.

4. *The censorship and prohibition of books on the part of the Catholic Church in no way represents a fear of knowledge or a mistrust of those who seek it, but only the desire to protect the unschooled and weak from being carried away from the truth that saves by false Christs and false prophets.*

This is amply evident from two facts. First, the Church insists that those who are being trained for her priesthood examine and study and analyze every heresy and every false philosophy that has ever been proposed in the history of mankind. She insists that those who are, in the words of Christ, "to teach all nations," know not only what Christ taught, but what those who have refused to accept Him, or who have twisted His doctrine to suit their fancies, have taught as well. The Church is not afraid to place any heresy or false teaching in the hands of those whose lives are dedicated to study and teaching and who live a regimen of prayer and mortification to hold their passions in check.

The second fact is that the Church readily makes exceptions to her severe prohibitions of certain doctrinal reading matter in favor of those who can give evidence that they have the scholarly background, the opportunity and time, the strong faith and self-discipline, to read what is forbidden without being harmed. Catholic professors in universities, Catholic writers and organizers, even ordinary men and women interested in explaining the faith to others, can obtain permission to read what is forbidden to most on the simple ground that they will not be harmed but will be able to help others by reading even the most brilliantly presented errors.

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As to obscene books and publications, anyone who says that the Church is unreasonable in prohibiting them is a perfect example of why a Church, and a Church's guardianship over reading matter are necessary. To want to be free to steep one's mind in obscenity is to want to be permitted to surrender one's body to lust and one's soul to hell. The Catholic Church will speak out against that as long as she lasts, and that will be till the crack of doom.

Understanding these things, every true Catholic will want to know and will be willing to follow the wise rules that his Church has laid down to govern his reading. He will read no books

dealing expressly with religious or moral doctrines that do not possess the imprimatur of a bishop or the express statement of ecclesiastical permission to be published. He will want to know what so-called classics or popular books have been banned by name by the authority of the Church. If he has the background and a reason for reading such books he will seek the necessary permission through his pastor. And he will scrupulously avoid buying, borrowing, possessing or reading any of the hundreds of books, magazines or pamphlets on the market, white or black, that are known to be or are obviously obscene.

Value of Death

A young soldier killed in action during World War II, had circled the following lines in Bishop Sheen's prayerbook, *Shield of Faith*, which was compiled and written expressly for servicemen, and contains many beautiful reflections:

"If He, Who valued life more than anyone ever valued life, did not think death too great a price to pay to defeat evil, why should I not be prepared in His name to suffer the hardships of armed service that evil may be conquered?"

So far the marked passage. Bishop Sheen continues in the prayer:

"If the Cross of our Saviour was a proof that there was something wrong in man that could be righted only by a sacrificial death, why should not this war be to me a proof that there is something so wrong with the modern world that it can be righted only by my sacrificial life?"

That the young soldier, like many others, appreciated and understood the value of his sacrifice is a good augur for the future of the world.

Here's How

"Don't interrupt, don't beg, don't be breezy, don't talk too much, don't mumble, don't giggle, don't argue. Don't be a finger fidgeter, a hand washer, a clothing adjuster, a tapper, a twister, nose puller, whisker feeler, or an Adam's apple adjuster.

"Don't brag and don't bluff. Any successful business man can spot bragging or bluffing easily. He's been doing it all his life."

Quote

Pre-Marriage CLINIC

Donald F. Miller

Long Engagements

Problem: I am a sophomore in college. I am in love with a pre-medical student who has four years of study to go after this year, and then his internship to take before he can practice his chosen profession. He is not well enough off to marry and support me and at the same time to continue his studies. Yet we feel that we are just the ones for each other and we want to marry some day. Is it wrong for us to look forward to keeping company as engaged persons for as long as five or six years before we get married?

Solution: It is easy to answer this question theoretically. Long engagements and company-keeping before marriage are not wrong if there is a reason for the delay of marriage and if both persons involved are morally and spiritually capable of resisting temptations and avoiding occasions of indulging their passions in any sinful way. It is possible to think of instances in which both these conditions are fulfilled. But it requires that the couple be so strong in their love of God and hatred of sin that, despite their great love for each other, they are able to avoid passionate kissing, prolonged embracing and all actions that are immodest for the unmarried.

Practically speaking, we are bound to say that the danger of sin in this situation is very great, and it is added to by the fact that the world does so many things to approve and promote sinful actions on the part of those who are keeping company or are engaged.

Therefore this must be set down as mandatory advice. If it has already been found that company-keeping with the firm intention of not marrying for five or six years is a constant occasion of mortal sins, then it must be given up and the engagement prorogued for the love of God and the sake of the immortal souls involved. A habit of mortal sin must be escaped at any cost, even that of giving up such an engagement and the company-keeping that occasions the sins.

If it is possible for the couple to so arrange the frequency and circumstances of their dating that the danger of mortal sin is rendered small, and if both make constant use of the spiritual means of meditation, prayer, and the sacraments to build up resistance to danger, then the engagement could be allowed to stand.

This must be added. A young man who seriously desires to take up the profession of medicine, and who knows that it will require six or seven years to reach his goal, is acting with the greatest imprudence if he permits himself to become seriously involved with a girl very early in his training. He not only places himself in the danger of sin, but makes it difficult for himself to prepare well for his important profession.

**Essay
on
Love**

Ernest F. Miller

Observations on what one would think love to be, if one had only the juke-boxes, the love-lorn letter-writers in the papers, and the cheap magazines by which to judge.

AND NOW I shall take up the subject of love, a dry and uninteresting subject, I am sure, especially to the young, but one that must be discussed in the interest of truth. I do this in order to prepare our readers for St. Valentine's day which is the 14th of February. St. Valentine's day is the day set aside by custom for expressing love.

What is love?

The dictionary says: "A strong, complex emotion or feeling causing one to appreciate, delight in, and crave the presence or possession of the object and to please or promote the welfare of that object; devoted affection or attachment. Such feeling between husband and wife or lover and sweetheart. In some games, as tennis, nothing."

But what does a crusty dictionary know about so delicate a subject as love? One might just as easily seek an answer from a stone.

Love, in reality, is something that is born in the bowels of a juke-box. The pangs of the birth—the moaning and the groaning, the whispering and the whining, the sighing and the sobbing—can be heard right out in the open by all who have ears to hear. The most innocent freshman in the most obscure high school can tell you that. The juke-box is the mother of love. Why, the world wouldn't know anything about love were it not for the juke-box.

In producing love, the juke-box has a terrible time of it. Always pain. Always agony. But nobody seems to be concerned in consequence. I mean that nobody who is in the tavern or the restaurant where the throes are going on seems to be worried over the awful cries that are flooding and filling the room. Nobody except the sensitive and the highly educated in things cultural.

These make fierce faces as though they were in pain themselves. They also make insulting remarks. And they gulp down their food or their drink so fast that they endanger their digestion. Their one desire seems to be to get out into the open air as quickly as possible. Can it be that they are unfeeling, incapable of appreciating the meaning of love, jaded and cynical as a result of too much knowledge? Can it be that they have filled their minds so full that they have squeezed out their hearts and therefore can no longer grasp the significance of love?

It is not so with the young people in the booths and at the counter. They cannot get enough of the melancholy parturition. As soon as one spasm of

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agony is over, they insert a coin into the box so that they can bring on another. It is positively eerie.

Yet, strange to say, the sadness of the songs proclaiming the everlastingness of love do not make the young people sad. They go ahead drinking their soft drinks, eating their hamburgers or their ice cream and making a din as though the juke-box were not having a time of it at all.

Perhaps the agonies of love soak into their subconscious even while they are not listening. Perhaps they are not missing a note, although to observe them one would suppose that they are missing all the notes. Perhaps they have the contradictory talent of feeling glad and sad at the same time. They can laugh and joke and kick their partner in the shins while they weep inside. They can die as love seems to be dying even before it is born; and they can act as though they did not care whether love was ever born or not.

At any rate it is admitted by all that boys and girls of a certain age find it impossible to breathe unless their breathing is done in the presence of a juke-box wailing over the piercing pain of love. And the louder the wailing, the more they like it. They are demons for punishment.

What is love?

All I can say is that it must be something terrible. I have always loved my mother and father and the other members of my family. Being a priest I have not permitted myself to step beyond that province. But in such love as I have experienced I have never met with the catastrophes and tragedies and calamities that the love born of the juke-box seems always to be suffering.

Hearts are forever breaking, nights are sleepless, minds are in despair.

There are ceaseless separations, incapable misunderstandings, sinister third parties. The clinging of the one to the other can be only for a moment. Cruel fate will be along is just a second to unwind the arms and to lower the boom of unavoidable farewell. Then the lovers can live in each other's arms only in their dreams. Can anything be sadder?

If the songs are correct in their definition of love, a man and a woman are out of their minds if they let themselves fall in love. They're asking for trouble. And they'll have nobody to blame but themselves. If they had listened to the songs that for half a generation have been whimpering in juke-boxes, they would have learned the true meaning of love. And they would have halted before the heart-breaks, the sleepless nights and the despair came upon them. They would have refused to fall in love and thereby saved themselves the separations, the misunderstandings, the predatory third parties.

But, is there not more to love than juke-boxes and mournful noises set to music emerging from the mouths of men and women (who do not mean a word they say) and making hearers believe that love and death are just about the same thing? Yes, there is. I have given you only a partial definition of love.

Love means the moon, red lips, golden hair, embraceable arms and eyes that shine like the stars, and many other props of the same kind that are so important that they are practically essential. At least no song about love can long be popular if it eschews these props. It is inconceivable for love even to come into existence unless it be launched on a veritable sea of tears and unless the whole premises be damp with foreboding over the possibility of

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somebody else coming along with arms more embraceable, with hair more golden, with prospects more alluring, with eyes more starlike and with the moon shining more brightly than it did the other time, whenever that was.

Nor must it be forgotten that the love born in the juke-boxes is for young people alone. Nobody beyond the age of advanced childhood can love or be in love. There is a point here. Nobody beyond the age of advanced childhood would be found dead with the kind of love the songs sing about unless, of course, they had gone out of their mind. Therefore, love must be for the young alone, for the squealing, fainting, incomprehensible high school crowd, and for those beyond the high school crowd who still think and act like the high school crowd, of which there are many.

As I said above, I am not too well versed in the science or the art or the business of love. But there is one thing that I am positive about. It is this. Love, such as song writers, songsters and all their relatives and friends are concerned with, deadens the mind and the imagination the way a torpedo deadens a ship when it strikes it right in the middle and explodes. It would seem that the very thought of writing a song about love paralyzes the mind completely.

This statement is not made lightly. Listen to the modern songs. The words do not make sense. Worse than that, they make nonsense. If a grown man recited them in the full light of day, those who heard him would either laugh as though a joke had been cracked or they would look upon the reciter as a little daft in the head. Yet, the ones who write the lyrics for the love songs of the day are supposed to be inspired by love to say what lovers

always say when they are in the company of their beloved. If that be true, love is a sterile, lifeless thing, and St. Valentine's day should be forever abolished from the face of the earth and the Gregorian calendar.

What is love?

Taken from another angle, it is that which you write about when you send off a letter to the lady who runs a column in the local newspaper for people who are having trouble with their heart. "Dear Miss Biggs: I am a girl 16 years old, a junior in high school,

• • • • •

Death is a Gun

Experts report that children spend approximately 24 hours a week before TV sets. And in spite of what advertisers claim, TV has its bad effects too. It is only a matter of time now until children will recognize none but violent deaths.

An Oskaloosa, Iowa, man tells of a little girl who has been exposed to over-stimulating radio and TV programs throughout her short life.

When she heard other children speak of their grandmother, she asked where her own grandmother was.

"She's dead," the child's mother said.

"Who shot her?" asked the little girl.

The Josephinum

• • • • •

and not considered unattractive by my friends. I am in love with a boy 38 years old who is divorced because his wife did not understand him, and has three children. My parents have forbidden me to see him. But I know that he loves me. And I love him. His children are darling. I know that I would make them a good mother. Can you tell me what I can do to make

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my parents see that we are made for each other and will never be happy until we get married? Yours truly, Perplexed."

That is a sample of love as love is dealt with in the press. It is a little different from the love of the juke-box because it is all peaches and cream, and everything is going to be just fine if the initial obstacle of parental opposition and so forth is removed. The only thing necessary to make this kind of love work is that, well, the two people be in love with one another. That's all. Nothing else matters.

Finally, there is the love that seems to be all cruelty and sensuality, as suggested by the lurid covers of the twenty-five cent books that one can buy in a drug store or a railroad station. Love is a frightening thing according to these pictures. Somebody is always getting hurt, indeed, torn to pieces. Nobody in love ever comes out on top. And nobody who reads about such love comes out on top either. This kind of love is a denial of decency, goodness and all the virtues that we expect to find in boys and girls who are properly brought up. This kind of love is for islands in the middle of oceans where people can go around half-dressed; or for gangsters who can take their love where they find it and put a few bullets through people in the process; or for people who don't believe in God or morality or purity. Love and impurity are the same thing in these books.

For some reason or other none of this seems right. Our mothers and fathers loved each other with a strong and persevering love. There was very little in their deep love for one another that one hears in the moaning of the love songs being ground out in the juke-boxes. And there was even less in their love of the sickening sugges-

No Comparison

A little British boy moved next door and his American neighbor, Tommy, was arguing with him about the relative merits of England and the United States.

"The King touched my grandfather on the head with a sword and made him a duke," said John, the little British boy.

"That's nothing," bragged Tommy. "An Indian touched my great-grandfather on the head with a tomahawk and made him an angel."

Dixie Roto Magazine

tiveness that is handed out in the dirty little books that peek out from their places on the news stands. And there was none of the foolishness that one reads so often in the columns that are used by the love-lorn in the daily papers. Yet, the love they had, different though it was from all this other, lasted until death.

It may be that the world has the wrong idea about love. It may be that our young people would be wisely advised if they did not take the literature and the music of the world too much to heart when determining what true love is.

What is true love, then?

The Catholic boy and girl can find the answer to that question in all the things that are contained in their holy religion. They can find the answer in the many fine books that have been written on the subject, which books are easily accessible to all who are of the proper age to read them. They can, or rather they will find the answer in their own hearts. Someday they will fall in love. Their love will be real love. Only then will they understand what real love is.

Teen-Age Problem

Donald F. Miller

Kissing Games

Problem: Is it sinful for high school boys and girls to take part in the kissing game called "post office" and other similar ones in which kissing is an important part? In some of these games the kisses are a mere formality, while in others the opportunity is given to make it quite a serious business. Does a fellow or a girl have to refuse to take part in such games even though they will be ridiculed and laughed at for so doing?

Solution: Surely any game that centers around or promotes passionate or prolonged kissing among young people can be recognized as seriously wrong, and every decent and clean-minded boy and girl should be glad to accept ridicule rather than take part in such games. It is certain that young people who make a game out of passionate kissing and thus openly and publicly approve of it, will ordinarily be guilty of all kinds of immodesty and indecency on their private dates.

With regard to the games that center around formal or ceremonial kisses, it must be said that even here there is danger those who take part in them will come to look on kissing as something cheap and common. There is the additional danger that they will pick up the idea from such games that kissing may be made a regular part of dating, and when that idea is implanted it is rare that young people can restrain themselves from passionate, immodest and therefore sinful kissing.

For these reasons parents should intelligently train their children to have nothing to do with any kind of kissing games at parties, and when they themselves supervise or are present at the parties of young people, should veto any suggestion that such games be played. They should know that, with the looseness of morals that is so common today, and with so much popular approval of sinful petting and love-making, it is their duty to ward off danger from their own children. Decent kisses are proper only to the more sacred relationships of human beings and should not be reduced to something cheap and common. Indecent or passion-provoking kisses are part of the pagan cult of the body and its lusts, and every genuine Christian knows that they are defiling to the soul.

The Real Martin Luther

A movie that is being seen by millions presents a legend that has been built up around the figure of Martin Luther. It is not right that these millions should be deprived of the historical facts that contradict the legend, which research experts have made available to all.

John E. Doherty

BEFORE 1900 Martin Luther was largely a legendary figure whom Protestants placed next to St. Paul in heaven, and, had their religion permitted it, would have invoked on their altars as a saint. Since that time, research and re-discovery of long hidden facts of his life have tumbled him down from the pedestal, and both Catholic and non-Catholic historians have shown him to have been something less than angelic.

Recently some Catholic writers have become sympathetic with the reformer, and, in the light of modern psychiatry, have tried to reveal a guiltless sincerity beneath the tragic weaknesses of his character. But it remained for a group of Lutheran ministers to resurrect the mythical Luther and to fit him for the dubious canonization of a movie that is very successful by Hollywood standards. Such success is indifferent to virtue or vice, but it may be asked whether the movie is a genuine dramatic success.

This critic believes that the ministers have sacrificed the real drama of Luther's life by making him serve the

purposes of propaganda. What is more important is the fact that the propaganda is dishonest. That Father Martin Luther, Augustinian monk of the Roman Catholic Church, aimed only at purifying the Church of abuses, is the thesis of the movie. In the face of historical events and the facts as known today, this is incredible.

I saw the movie, as an observer for THE LIGUORIAN, between trains in New York City. The theatre was not filled, but there were quite a few clerical-looking gentlemen and housewives in the audience. All sat absorbed, for the movie is well done. But at the end, one distinguished-looking gentleman, obviously taking me to be of the Lutheran cloth, took me by the arm and said: "The picture doesn't solve the problem. The problem is, can you take away one authority without substituting another?" I heartily agreed that the problem remains.

I also believe that many Lutherans will see the picture and carry away deepened convictions of all the traditional untruths about the reformation and hardened prejudices against the Catholic Church. That is what the makers of the film intended, and the effect will have been produced by a

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patently dishonest representation of history.

A truthful drama about Luther would have revealed him for what he was — a man of great passions, tortured by the sense of personal sin, in conflict with himself and with others from almost the beginning to the end of his days. Such a play would be a greater tragedy than Shakespeare's Hamlet. Yet the makers of this movie, casting aside all semblance of historical or psychological veracity, have made Luther into a simple, uncomplicated, forthright lover of justice and truth and ultimately into a solid and contented family man. Surely a good part for the Irishman with the Oxford accent who played the role!

He first appears in the film as a fine, clean-limbed youth such as might be seen on an autumn afternoon in America playing right tackle for Notre Dame or the University of Minnesota. He is presented as a peasant with broad honesty, but also as an ink-stained scholar with a keen mind. He is rugged but only a bit ungentele, and possessed of the soul of a poet. He is pictured as reverent, kind, considerate, tolerant of others. He is a dutiful son of the Church, troubled only with the thought of his sins and the evils in the Church.

Sometime after his ordination to the priesthood as an Augustinian monk, the picture shows two things happening to him that bring about the climax in his life. A fellow-monk gives him a complete text of the Bible, and he is sent on a pilgrimage to Rome. What he sees at Rome and what he reads in the Bible opens his eyes for the first time. The thought comes to him that the Church has erected a system of unnecessary works that stand as a barrier between the individual soul and Christ.

Simultaneously, he comes across the passage in St. Paul in which it said that it is not by human works that the soul is saved but by faith. Since St. Paul states clearly enough that faith justifies, but leaves room for doubt as to whether he means alone, Luther himself writes the word "alone" after faith into his copy of the Bible.

The rest of the picture follows the usual course of the legend of the white knight: There is the challenge to Tetzel (pictured a la Hollywood as the fat, brass-voiced, ignorant preacher interested only in money); the debate with John Eck; the break with the Pope and the authority of the Church; the dramatic appeal to the Bible as sole authority (with the word "alone" added to St. Paul's declaration on faith); the protection given him by Frederick of Saxony; the translation of the Bible into German (without mention of the fact that 14 such translations had appeared under Catholic auspices before his); the opening of the convents and monasteries, and his own marriage to a nun, pictured as entered into to encourage monks and nuns who remained doubtful about breaking their vow of celibacy; then the settling down to a peaceful domestic life in which he reads the Bible, writes tracts, catechizes the neighbors' children, and directs the vast movement he has started. By this time it is well established by the movie that Luther is a lover of chastity, a friend of truth, a lover of liberty, a tolerant leader, a peaceful child of God. So the picture ends.

My first reaction to the picture was to wonder what German Lutherans will think of it. It was made by Americans in Germany, but they completely ignored the findings of scholars and researchers in Germany since the turn

of the century. It was certainly less than honest to announce at the beginning of the picture that the film was made only after consultation with historical authorities of all faiths.

Probably no figure in all history has been subjected to so much study in the past 50 years as Martin Luther. The towering genius who touched off these studies was Rev. Henry Suso Denifle, O. P. He published his monumental study of Luther in 1905, and it sent every honest historical scholar in Germany scurrying to libraries and sources to check on its findings. Even Catholics were embarrassed over the completeness with which the myth of Luther was exploded by the work.

Yet no one has ever been able to cast a reasonable doubt on Denifle's scholarship and accuracy. He was probably the greatest medievalist of all time, and he had one great advantage over Protestant historical authorities. For their version of the reformation, these latter had practically nothing to go on but the recollections of Luther himself, set down in his old age when he had developed a pathological hatred of the Catholic Church.

Denifle, on the other hand, had just completed the study of three centuries of religious life of the monasteries in France and Germany. For him research was as exciting as a detective story, and he tracked down every clue to documents and manuscripts dealing with his subject. Among these he located much of what Luther wrote before his break with the Church and many unexpurgated records of his conversations taken down by his followers and admirers through the later years of his life.

Most English and American historians have steadily ignored the irrefutable findings of Denifle. This fatal weakness was exploited by Arnold

Age of Martyrs

There are considerable grounds for the assertion that the Church is going through the greatest persecution in her long history of being persecuted. Consider the following figures gathered by the *Petrus-Blatt*, published in Berlin.

Almost 65 million Catholics are under the domination of the Communists. Of the 127 dioceses in the countries dominated by the Communists, 58 are vacant. In Lithuania, Romania and North Korea, all the bishops are either exiled, dead or in prison, and in the other Iron Curtain countries, the majority of the bishops have suffered the same fate. Note in all this the diabolic way in which the Communists follow the old saying: "Strike the shepherd, and the flock will be dispersed."

From *Veritas*, information bulletin on Communist activities, comes the following item: In the prisons or forced labor camps of Czechoslovakia at the present time there are more than 600 of the country's 5500 diocesan priests, and 2900 of the 3600 priest members of religious orders. Of the 12,000 nuns, over half have been interned. Of the 575 seminarians, 80 percent are doing military service.

Lunn in a published debate with W. G. Coulton, late professor of medieval history at Cambridge University in England. Coulton, though a great scholar and extremely well versed in everything unfavorable to the Catholic Church in medieval times, admitted to Lunn that the facts unearthed by Denifle about Luther had been unknown to him. He finally said:

"Denifle is perhaps the greatest medievalist of our time. I have only dipped into his Luther . . . but his case for the prosecution is very formidable.

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He has dug out of Luther's 'Table Talk' and letters passages that are not only repellent but grossly repulsive, and it is discreditable to Lutheran historians that these things should have remained so long unknown or unconfessed. If I myself had ever posed as an infallible historian, here is very plain proof of the contrary. In so far as I have failed until now to realize the worst that Denifle had to say, I have fallen short of the high standard."

It is necessary to set down such proofs of Denifle's scholarship because, in a field of history so controversial as that of Luther, there is always the danger of one-sidedness by reason of prejudice. The movie, "Martin Luther," is thus one-sided and unobjective. It will be seen by millions who will draw conclusions, if they know nothing other about the facts than what the movie gives, that will be unfounded and erroneous. It is the duty of lovers of truth to set forth the facts presented by irrefutable, historical authority.

Denifle asked a number of questions that, up to his time, were usually answered in one way by the legend of Luther and in another way by the historical documents. They are just as appropriately asked in respect to the current movie.

Was Luther chaste? Denifle presents Luther's own words to prove that he was not. He himself admitted that his motive for marrying the nun, Catherine von Bora, was not noble but sheer concupiscence. He was never spiritually at ease in the intimacies of married life. He describes these with a crudeness and brutality that at times outdoes anything we find today in Kinsey reports. He describes marriage relations as a necessary outlet for concupiscence, but as always sinful.

Many of his moral teachings derive from the fact that he holds that sins of the flesh are unavoidable and must be accepted as the lesser of two evils. On this ground he allows divorce when a wife cannot or will not do her duty for her husband. He permitted one of his most powerful patrons to be married to two women at the same time. He even tried to win over Henry VIII of England to his cause by offering him the privilege of becoming a bigamist as a Lutheran. All these facts are documented and certain.

Was Luther a poet of fine sentiments? Denifle did not deny that he possessed great genius, but proved that he was coarse and obscene; he was incapable of moderation and his most effective form of speech was invective. Invariably when he spoke of the Pope or the Church his hatred ran away with him, and when he spoke of the Jews he was insanely anti-semitic. On these subjects his conversation was laden with filth. His habit of borrowing metaphors from ventral functions of the body led him into frequent blasphemy, and his influence corrupted the German language with obscenities.

Was Luther a lover of truth? He contradicted himself habitually. He tried to persuade Philip of Hesse to lie about his bigamy to avoid scandal. He said that the Bible had been kept back from him as a Catholic, but there is absolute proof that the very book given him by the Augustinians whom he joined was a complete and beautifully bound Bible. He once boasted cynically that in three sermons he could turn all Wittenberg back from Protestantism to the old Church.

Was Luther a lover of liberty? Under his influence, it is true, the German peasants revolted against their masters, but when they got out of hand he said

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that they should be shot down like dogs. Human nature, he said, is incapable of governing itself. He took authority away from the Church and gave supreme authority to the civil government. But he left no safe-guards against the abuses of that authority, and thus may be said to have paved the way for Hitler.



An Ugly Brood

Selfishness is exaggerated looking out for oneself and even in stooping to anything for oneself. In public life it is the mother of two unlovely children, inflation and discrimination.

Bishop Francis Haas



Was Luther considerate, tolerant of others? The record shows that he was unable to enter into the mind of others. He condemned the rival reformer Zwingli far more violently than Catholics have ever condemned Luther, and he could brook no contradiction from his followers.

Did Luther live serenely till the end?

It is now known that he was always restless, ever seeking the peace of conscience that he had come to consider the only test of truth. In a now famous conversation with Melancthon before his death he predicted that after he died Protestantism would lead to anarchy. In melancholy anticipation of this, he permitted Melancthon to change some of his basic teachings so that today Lutheranism is not the same doctrine as Luther taught most of his life.

The chief value, however, of Denifle's research was not the light it threw on the character of Luther. Rather it was to demolish the account that Luther gave of the reasons for the refor-

mation, which are essentially those given in the film. In the movie, Luther's quarrel is presented as a quarrel with the abuses of the Church. This is in reality but a smokescreen, because Luther's difficulties did not stem from any Church practices such as indulgences, but from the conflict that goes on in every man between the disordered demands of his pride and his flesh, and the law of God. Luther's revolt was against faith in human nature, against reason, against authority, against responsibility and free will.

As evidence of how Luther misrepresented his fight with the Church, Denifle brought to light the remarkable writings that came from his pen *before* he left the Church. These contradict clearly what he later claimed to have been the cause of his revolt.

He was to maintain later that the Church had kept him from Christ, the merciful Saviour, and impressed on him only the justice and vengeance of God. Yet as a young novice he had written glowingly of the traditional teaching of Catholics that God's mercy is above all His works.

He was to maintain later (and this has been handed down to his followers to this day) that Catholics hope to be saved merely through external penitential works. Yet while he was still a Catholic he left a record of his adherence to the Catholic principle that such external works derive their value chiefly from the internal dispositions of the contrite soul, and he quoted the tradition of the Church to prove it.

He later maintained that the Augustinians with whom he had lived were a gloomy, forbidding lot, ever plagued with thoughts of God's punishments. But the truth is that the Augustinians have always been known for moderation and cheerfulness. Their common prayers have a spirit of joy-

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ousness, and one that is recited by them often each day is this beautiful address to God's mercy: "O God, Who chooseth to have mercy on those who hope in Thee rather than to be angry with them . . ."

Other false claims of the Luther legend are also reaffirmed in the movie. He is represented, for example, as restoring the Bible to the people. Actually, he did the opposite; he took the Bible from the people, who, up to that time, had accepted it as the inspired word of God, by undermining its value. "If anyone," he once said, "quote the Bible against me, I quote Christ against the Bible." He did not say where he would find Christ other than in the Bible or in the Catholic tradition that had come down to him through 1500 years. As for popularizing the Bible, Guttenberg, a devout Catholic, had done that by printing the Bible in German decades before Luther's time. There were at least 14 Catholic German versions of the Bible before Luther brought out his own.

One favorite claim of Protestants today is that Luther, by doing away with the authority of the Church, restored Christ to the people. The truth is that, had it not been for the authority of the Church, heresies would long before Luther have obliterated Christ from the minds of the people. An example of this was the Arian heresy of the first centuries of Christianity. The great Protestant historian, Thomas Carlyle, affirmed that, had not the Church solemnly defined what must be the true belief of Christians about the divinity of Christ in the face of the Arian heresy, the Christian faith today would be only a legend. Yet that is what is happening among Protestants, for it is not only the Unitarian sect that denies the divinity of Christ, but disbelief in that doctrine is rampant

among all Protestant sects and especially among ministers, as recent polls have shown.

Another mistaken claim is that Luther restored dignity and freedom to man. This is contradicted by the documented fact that Luther denied that man could trust his reason at all, and said that he possessed no free will whatsoever when it came to choosing between good and evil.

Far more serious than such misrepresentations is the fact that the movie directly pictures the Catholic Church as teaching that an indulgence can take away sin, and even goes so far as to depict Catholics as believing that a plenary indulgence gives them permission to sin without fear of punishment. This is so far from the truth of doctrine and fact that it is hard to see in it anything but an attempt to cloud minds with prejudice and to make it impossible for even the impartial witness of such things to think kindly of the Catholic Church.

"Sin and sin bravely, but only believe more strongly and you shall be saved," said Luther to Melancthon by way of emphasizing his belief that we are saved by faith alone. It is useless for Protestants to retort that Luther was speaking rhetorically and that he certainly was not commanding anyone to commit sin. No one believes that he was, but his commentary remains the logical conclusion of his principles and Luther himself would be the last to deny it. In their charity, Catholics pray for Luther, realizing that they have no right to judge the soul of anyone, least of all so neurotic a personality as that of Luther. In regard to his teachings, however, and especially the principle that we are saved by faith alone, there is no reason for not condemning them. Our Lord Himself tells us: "By their fruits you shall know them."

how to recognize a miracle

Louis G. Miller

Miracles are the one means through which God has always chosen to make Himself and His will known to men.

Those who want to reject God go to great pains to reject all miracles.

IN THE issue of *Look* magazine for November 3rd, 1953, there was featured an interview with Bertrand Russell, the well known British philosopher. The article was called "What Is An Agnostic?" As might be supposed, Mr. Russell, the hard-working modern apostle of agnosticism, had much to say in defense of not believing in anything, which is as good a definition of agnosticism as you are likely to get from a practicing agnostic.

We are concerned here with only one small fragment of Mr. Russell's voluminous enlarging of the agnostic theme. One of the questions purported to be asked him was this:

How do agnostics explain miracles and other revelations of God's omnipotence?

Here, word for word, is Mr. Russell's answer:

Agnostics do not think there is any evidence of "miracles" in the sense of happenings contrary to the natural law. We know that faith healing occurs, and is in no sense miraculous. At Lourdes certain diseases can be cured and others cannot. Those that can be cured at Lourdes can probably be cured by any doctor in whom the patient has faith.

In reference to this interesting and curious statement, we would like to explore a little further into the subject of miracles, explaining the Catholic view of them, and perhaps giving a small commentary on Mr. Russell's words.

The word "miracle" is given a wide variety of meanings, and of course people are free to use the word in any sense they please. You can, for instance, say if you like of your old pastor: "It will be a miracle if he ever preaches less than half an hour on Sunday." Remarkable as such a thing might be, to describe it as a "miracle" is to use the word in a very wide sense indeed. But for our purpose in this article we use the word in a very strict sense, and we define it as a happening which involves the clear suspension of the ordinary laws of nature, and therefore postulates the intervention of God. Thus for example the term miracle in this sense would be applied to the case of a man with an advanced case of tuberculosis (clearly ascertainable by X-rays) who suddenly and instantaneously found himself completely cured.

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Let us emphasize that we exclude from our definition of a miracle happenings which may indeed be remarkable, but which lack the note of a clear suspension of nature's laws. It may indeed be remarkable that a man on the very brink of death from pneumonia should rally and gradually regain his strength and health, but this is not a miracle in the strict sense of the word. Nor can the cure of nervous disorders qualify as miracles in this strict sense, because such a cure may have a purely natural explanation. Nor if there is any possibility of coincidence can we use the term miracle in the strict sense. Thus you may call it a miracle if you lose \$100, and later, under very unusual circumstances, find the money again. Even though it may well be true that St. Anthony helped you to find it, the finding of the money would not qualify in the strict sense as a miracle.

As examples of what we mean by miracles in the strict sense of the term, consider the following two well-authenticated cases.

The first is the celebrated one involving as an observer the famous French novelist, Emile Zola. Zola professed himself to be an agnostic, but he was, from a novelist's viewpoint, interested in Lourdes, and in 1892 he made a special trip there seeking material for a forthcoming novel.

The officials at Lourdes were glad to cooperate, and they introduced Zola to Marie Lemarchand, an invalid whose case was described officially as follows:

A case of lupus had preyed upon her nose and mouth. Ulceration had spread and was hourly spreading and devouring the membranes in its progress.

The cartilage of the nose was almost eaten away, the mouth was drawn all on one side by the swollen condition of the upper lip, the whole was a frightful distorted mass of matter and oozing blood. Both lungs were tubercular, and she had open sores on her legs.

This is the medical record, testified to by the doctors who examined her at Lourdes before she was placed in the bath of water from the Lourdes spring. A Dr. d'Hombres, who had seen her immediately before her immersion, afterwards followed her to the hospital and testified:

"I recognized her quite well, although her face was entirely changed. Instead of the horrible sore I had lately seen, the surface was red, it is true, but dry and covered with a new skin. The other sores had dried up in the bath. The doctors who examined her could find nothing the matter with her lungs."

We shall have more to say about Zola's reaction to this cure later. Meanwhile, here is a second example of a miracle in the strict sense of the term:

Studying for the priesthood in an eastern seminary at our last information is a young man, an ex-G.I., named Peter Smith. He was born in 1921 in Columbus Hospital Extension, New York City. This hospital is run by the order of sisters founded by St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, who died in 1918, reputed a saint by all who knew her.

Shortly after the birth of Peter Smith, the attendant nurse, following routine procedure, introduced a few drops of a silver nitrate solution into the baby's eyes, to counteract any possible infection. As soon as she had done so, she realized that a horrible

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mistake had been made. Instead of a two per cent solution, as prescribed, a 50 percent solution had been used, and it was immediately apparent that the tissue of the baby's eyes had been severely damaged. A doctor, hastily summoned, examined the baby's eyes and stated that the damage was irreparable; the baby's eyesight was gone.

Naturally enough, the nurse was frantic with self-reproach and fear. She rushed from the room and in the corridor encountered one of the sisters. It happened that this sister had with her a small relic of Mother Cabrini; leading the distraught nurse back into the child's room, the sister pinned to its clothing the relic; then she and the nurse fell on their knees in prayer.

A short time later the doctor examined the baby's eyes once more, and straightened up with surprise. He called in another doctor to verify his findings, and to their amazement it was clear that in some way the damage done to the baby's eyes had been completely repaired. And as we have said, the recipient of this favor from heaven is alive and in possession of excellent eyesight today, 32 years later.

This second case, it may be mentioned, was one of the miracles used in fulfillment of a standard requirement for the canonization of Mother Cabrini. Two such clear, unmistakable, "first-class miracles" (as the Church calls them) must be worked through the intercession of a candidate for canonization before the Church will declare such a one to be a saint.

There are, it would seem, two separate aspects of such cases which a fair, unbiased observer must take into account.

First, there is the question of whether such happenings are *possible*.

The secularist, "liberal," agnostic frame of mind begins by denying the bare possibility of miracles; this of course is a logical consequence of denying that there is a God, or at least denying that God has any power or influence in the world.

"A miracle," wrote Hume, one of the early British agnostics, "is a violation of the laws of nature, and as a firm and unalterable experience has

A little girl

Paying a visit to the church;
She clatters to the front,
Bobs one knee, ducks into the pew,
And prays such a short while. . . .
Yet, while she hurries out of church,
Christ looks after her, I'm sure,
With a smile.

LGM

established these laws, the proof against a miracle from the very nature of the fact is as entire as any from experience can be."

But, as Arnold Lunn points out, this is to beg the question. The question is whether the laws of nature can ever be suspended by a force outside nature. Hume answers, in effect, "the laws of nature can't be suspended because the laws of nature can't be suspended." He was led to this illogicality, of course, because he began with the fixed principle in his mind that there is no supernatural agency which has any power to act in human affairs. No evidence could even find admission into his mind which conflicted with this obsession.

Even a so-called agnostic, one might suppose, would have to admit at least the "possibility" of miracles; since, by his own *credo*, he isn't sure of any-

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thing, how can he be sure that miracles are impossible? But notice how Mr. Russell, in the statement quoted at the outset of this article, says blandly: "there is no evidence of miracles in the sense of happenings contrary to the natural law."

Which brings us to the second aspect of our subject. Granted that miracles are *possible*, what evidence is there that actually they do happen? We have already described two well-authenticated cases out of many that might have been used. The evidence is at hand; how does the agnostic react to it?

Perhaps the classic example is that of Zola, when brought face to face with Marie Lemarchand.

Zola, as we have said, had professed a great interest in Lourdes, where such strange and wonderful things were said to take place.

"I only want to see a cut finger dipped in water and come out healed," he had said, "and I will believe."

We have already described the condition of Marie Lemarchand; Zola saw her before she was immersed in the Lourdes water, and he was present in the hospital when the girl was brought there, immediately after her cure had taken place.

"Behold the case of your dreams, M. Zola," said the president of the medical board.

"Ah, no," said Zola, "I do not want to look at her. She is still too ugly," alluding to the red color of her skin. Then a little later in memorable words he stated to the presiding doctor what might be taken as the agnostic "*credo*":

"Were I to see all the sick at Lourdes cured, I would not believe in a miracle."

This is the typical agnostic and secularist attitude and few of this type,

scientists though they may call themselves, seem able to break through the iron ring of native bias and examine the facts for what they are.

This attitude, carried to the final degree of ridiculousness, is reflected in the action of the British Pension Board towards another celebrated Lourdes cure, that of John Traynor in 1923. Traynor was a veteran of World War I, and had been badly shot up; the muscles of his right arm were completely severed, and there was a hole in his head through which his brain could be seen pulsating. The British War Pension Ministry had declared him 100 percent disabled, and was paying him a full pension.

More dead than alive, Traynor was taken to Lourdes, and on July 25, 1923, to the amazement of all, was suddenly and completely cured and healed of all his ailments. Returning to his home in Liverpool, this man went into the coal and hauling business, and had no trouble lifting 200-pound sacks of coal.

Now comes the ironic phase of the story. Since he was able to earn a good living for himself after his cure, Traynor thought it only just that his pension be discontinued. This, however, the British War Pension Ministry solemnly refused to do. Their doctors had examined him and found him incurable, and incurable in their eyes he must remain; the 100 percent disability pension was continued for an able-bodied Traynor down to the time of his death in 1943. It is doubtful whether blindness of this density can be matched by any future generation of official or unofficial agnostics.

One great scientist, at first an agnostic, but willing to sit down humbly before the evidence, was Alexis Carrel, Nobel prize winner and author of *Man the Unknown*, best seller of a

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decade past. In this wise and penetrating study of man's makeup, Carrel has this to say of miracles:

Miraculous cures seldom occur. Despite their small number, they prove the existence of organic and mental processes that we do not know. They show that certain mystic states, such as that of prayer, have definite effects. They are stubborn, irreducible facts, which must be taken into account . . . science has to explain the entire realm of reality.

Coming back now to Mr. Bertrand Russell's statement as quoted at the beginning of this article, let us see how faithfully his words reflect the "liberal," secularist attitude, and how illogical they are in the face of facts.

After stating his belief that miracles do not occur, he goes on to say:

We know that faith healing occurs, and is in no sense miraculous.

To which we answer: What has that got to do with the question at issue? Whether or not faith-healing occurs, and just how much, if it does occur, it depends on natural causes, are separate questions. The evidence for the miracles we have described still remains.

At Lourdes certain diseases can be cured and others cannot.

Is this supposed to strengthen Mr. Russell's argument against miracles? No one ever contended that all the sick at Lourdes are cured. A miracle in the very nature of things is a rare and exceptional happening, which in itself adds to its proving force.

Those that can be cured at Lourdes can probably be cured by any doctor in whom the patient has faith.

This strange statement hardly needs any comment. What kind of faith in the baby whose eye tissue was burned and scarred would have enabled the doctor to restore it?

Our conclusion must be that Mr. Bertrand Russell, who has worldwide fame as a scientist, is being very unscientific in not examining the evidence for miracles with fairness and impartiality.

To anyone who examines the evidence in this spirit, miracles remain a tremendous sign of God's power, worked in order that our faith may be strengthened and our way made clear to the final goal of happiness in heaven.

Meditation on a Train

People who litter up the floor
With papers, peelings, an apple core
I surely have no fondness for.

The lady with the strident voice,
The whole car hears her (they have no choice)
Is far from making me rejoice.
But the one who really gets my goat
Is the child who chocolates up my coat.

LGM



For Wives and Husbands Only

Donald F. Miller

Birth-Control and the Natural Law

Problem: How can you say that birth-control is a sin because it is against nature, when there are so many things in our nature that we go against without anybody thinking that we thereby commit a sin? We cut our hair, which, if we permitted nature to take its course, would grow long. We trim our finger-nails. We have operations to remove tonsils, appendixes and other things. If these things, though against nature, are not wrong, why should birth-control be wrong?

Solution: No one has ever said that everything we do that changes the course that nature of itself would take is wrong. The principle of the natural law is this: it is sinful to use any human faculty to which God has given a necessary purpose, while at the same time deliberately destroying its purpose. God gave human beings the powers of sex as the one means He wanted to be used for the necessary purpose of continuing the human race. No individual is bound to use these powers. Not even married people are bound to use them, nor, if they do use them, are they limited only to using them only when children can certainly be conceived. But to use them and deliberately to annul or interfere with their purpose is against the obvious plan that God set up when He created human beings, and endowed them with the powers of sex.

There is nothing wrong with cutting our hair and shaving our faces and trimming our nails because obviously there is no necessary purpose that God intended these parts of our body to serve. We are free to let them grow, or to cut and trim them, just as we please.

It is even easier to see why necessary operations are not a violation of the natural law. The natural law commands every human being to preserve his life as long as possible. This obligation binds him to subject the good of any part of his body to the life and welfare of the whole. If an appendix becomes diseased and threatens the very life of the body, the appendix must be removed, and its removal is dictated by the natural law.

Someone may say, why then may we not practice birth-control when having a child will endanger the life of the mother? The answer is that, in cases where the danger of child-birth to the life of the mother is certain and absolute, there is a simple way of averting it, and that is by not performing the actions that God designed for the procreation of children. If a certain food is bound to kill you, you are not permitted to eat it and then quickly cause it to be vomited so as to save your life. You save your life by simply not eating that particular food. So it is with the actions God designed for procreation. In the rare cases in which child-bearing would surely be fatal, sterilization or birth-control is not the remedy, but giving up the actions that lead to conception.

Consider the Confessional

It is a lowly place, an unadorned place, a penitential place not only for the one confessing but for the confessor. But it is the best place in all the world from which to go forth into a new year.

Ernest F. Miller

THE BEST place to get a start (with a firm resolution) for the bright new year of 1954 is not on the tail of a hang-over or on the beetling shelf of an over-expanded stomach or on the edge of a sharp and slippery tongue, but rather in the dark and cramped interior of a confessional, and on one's knees.

Why? Because Jesus Christ invented confession; and because the purpose of confession is to lead to heaven tramps, harlots, murderers, adulterers, thieves, hypocrites, gluttons, drunkards, slanderers and just ordinary sinners and whited sepulchres like ourselves. A good confession, backed up with true sorrow and a firm determination to amend, can put elasticity in the muscles of the soul and bring a smile of approval to the lips of the Lord almost faster than anything else. Any resolution that doesn't take God and heaven into consideration is silly. It can preserve the body from the tell-tale ravages of excess so that some day the body will be a beautiful corpse; but it won't add much shine or shimmer to the soul. In the final analysis it's the soul that counts.

So be it. I shall not prove either the first or the second of the above propositions. If Christ didn't invent confession when He said, "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth . . . Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained," He was not using words in the ordinary acceptance of the meaning of words.

If Christ actually did mean confes-

sion when He said those words, a priest would be a simpleton with the I.Q. of a moron to use his power of forgiveness without knowing the merits and demerits of the case on which he was asked to exercise his power. He'd be like the judge who would say in court, "Ten years," to a man brought before him for trial without so much as hearing of testimony of even the general details of the crime of which the man was accused. If the institution of confession means anything at all, it means that a man has to tell his sins to one having the power to forgive them. It is by doing just this that a resolution for the new year can effect the greatest good.

Christ designed confession without a doubt. But one thing that Christ did not design was the confessional. It was man who did that. And what a job he did! Let us then talk about the confessional.

If the devil ever won a victory over man, including architects, monsignors and simple carpenters carrying a union card, he won one here. Perhaps his failures in destroying confession (although he did win a number of nervous and curious minds to his way of thinking) was so great that he decided to exercise his wrath on the place where confessions are heard, and on the minds of those whose function it is to draw up the blueprints for confessionals and to bring these blueprints into reality with hammer and nail.

For example some confessionals are too small. When the priest sits on his board or on his chair in the middle

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partition of the confessional, he is so squeezed in that he has to lower himself into place when he begins his hearings as a ship's derrick lowers a crate into the corner of the hold that has space for only one more piece of freight. And so he sits as long as sins come groaning through the grate. Cramps and charley horses notwithstanding, he has to remain bottled up and battened down until the docket has been cleared.

The grate is the little window inside the confessional through which the sins are sent. It always has a screen on it, sometimes with a curtain over the screen completely concealing penitent from priest. People who don't know any better (some of them should know better) say that money is passed through the screen. The accusation is undeserving of an answer. Money is not passed through the screen. It doesn't cost anything to go to confession except embarrassment for the accuser and fatigue for the listener. Let that be the end of it.

Other confessionals are too big. The priest's board (that on which he sits) is so wide that no matter how much area the expanse of his person (when in repose) takes up, he still has to slide from side to side when he hears a confession first through the grate on his left and then through the grate on his right. It is a trying experience to spend an afternoon or a long evening sliding from one end of a board to the other and then back again. It can play havoc with clothes and with other things.

Still other confessionals are too noisy. Sometimes I think that the devil is especially mixed up in this to keep people away from telling their sins. They are afraid that they will be found out by their neighbors who may be hovering too near to where the wretched account is being given. There is

danger that unless they speak in the lowest of tones, they might be heard outside. The wood of the confessional acts as a sounding board, a telephone wire, a broadcasting booth. Everlastingly the voice must be kept low, very low, to the faintest of whispers, until finally the ones concerned must sharpen their ears to the fineness of a radio antenna to hear anything at all.

It is easy to see how this can frighten people. The devil is always busy anyway urging excuses on them for not going to confession. This condition plays right into his hands. "I'm a little deaf. I can't hear what Father says." Or, "It's impossible for me to go to confession, for I cannot keep my voice low. Before I know it, I am telling my sins to the whole congregation." Of course, this should not be a reason for refusing to receive the absolution. On the day of general judgment unconfessed and unforgiven sins will be told the whole world. It will be far more embarrassing. Still, a noise-exuding confessional can make a difficult duty even more difficult than otherwise it would be.

Then there is the sound-proof confessional. Not only are all sounds eliminated that come from the outside; but all sounds are eliminated that come from the inside too, including the sounds made by the sinner telling his sins. This is due to the substance that covers the grate. It is a substance calculated to prevent breaths from being exchanged and germs, too, if germs are at large either in the system of the absolver or the absolved. The priest much fasten his ear to the grate as he would fasten his ear to the old-fashioned trumpet of the man whose ears are completely gone. This is hard. This is a fertile cause for impatience. Germs and bad breath are almost easier to take.

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I want to make it clear that these rough circumstances are not universal in the Church of God. There are good confessionals at large throughout the world, especially amongst the newer churches that are springing up on all sides. But the other type is found not too uncommonly even in the best and most beautiful churches. And that is why I say that perhaps the devil has a hand in the business. He found it impossible to destroy confession. So he goes about like a serpent suggesting plans for confessionals.

Now, this should not be allowed. The confessional is a courtroom. It is a more important courtroom than any other courtroom in the world. And that includes the supreme court of the United States, the courtroom of the United Nations, and the courtroom that was established to try the Nazi war criminals. The courtroom of the confessional settles cases on which heaven and hell depend. Its province is not life imprisonment or death on the gallows but eternal imprisonment and death in a fire that will never go out and that will never kill. It has the power of saying that this prison and this fire will never confine and will never burn. What a mighty power that is!

Most courtrooms are set up with at least a minimum of style. They have brightly-polished panels or drapes to add solemnity to the scene. They have desks and benches that carry a note of seriousness by the very way that they are painted and placed in position. The ceiling is adorned with murals (sometimes) and hung with ponderous chandeliers (especially the old-time courtrooms). Policemen guard the doors; lawyers write furiously on paper; judges appear in long black and (sometimes) bearded faces. Those who stand before a human court are made to

tremble by the portentousness of the furnishings before a single word is spoken. Justice is the central character here. And justice must be appeased with silks and velvets and not with rags and the dusty, grimy accoutrement of beggars.

Many confessionals are the very opposite of human courtrooms. They are boxes made of three compartments, one for the priest (in the middle) and two for the penitents (on the sides). There are no furnishings in them except kneelers for the sinners and a board or chair for the priest. A crucifix may hang in each of the three compartments, and a fan may hang in the priest's part, to be used when the weather is particularly hot. That is about all. One would almost think that the confessional is not a courtroom at all.

In a sense perhaps a lowly, ungarnished confessional is good, indicative of what goes on inside. Speaking very frankly, what is a confessional? It is a drain into which is poured the effluvium of suppurating spiritual sores that have been pierced by the sharp-edged lancet of sorrow, purpose of amendment and absolution. It is a storage room where are packed ceiling-high the crumbling packages of sin, odorous and repulsive, crawling and alive with pride and rebellion, tied up and ready for delivery to the fire by the God-given power of the priest.

The angels who stand guard undoubtedly hold their noses while they are on duty. They must stand in a bucket of garbage, a swamp for green and writhing things that twist and snarl in men's souls and slither out in the confessional to be struck down and killed by the upraised hand of a representative of God. What a place the confessional must be in the eyes and in the nostrils of those who are not

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blinded to spiritual realities and who can see clearly the unloading that goes on there! The impotent rage of the demons as their victims slip away; the sweat of blood flowing down the face of Christ; the father welcoming back the prodigal son; the sound of crunching muscle and flesh as the nails are pulled out of divine hands and feet: souls now free from disease but naked and weak and in need of nourishment to sustain the health given back to them by the operation of confession. All this must make a picture that is both awesome and awful. It is God

operating on earth as a surgeon, as a demolition expert, as a father and as a judge. And the devils must cower in the corner as the work of cutting, draining, repairing and patching goes on.

What merely human resolution that proposes no more than the checking of a human vice to avoid over-weight or morning-after hang-overs can compare with the resolution made in the confessional under the eyes of God? Catholics are wise if they start the new year where it should be started — in the confessional.

Prayer For All Times

Following is the beautiful prayer composed by St. Thomas Moore as he lay a prisoner in the Tower of London just shortly before being executed:

"Take from me, good Lord, this lukewarm fashion, or rather key-cold manner of meditation, and this dullness in praying unto Thee. And give me warmth, delight and quickness in thinking upon Thee; and give me Thy grace to long for Thine holy sacraments, and specially to rejoice in the presence of Thy very blessed Body (sweet Saviour Christ in the holy sacrament of the Altar) and duly to thank Thee for Thy gracious visitation therewith and at that high memorial, with tender compassion, to remember and consider Thy most bitter passion. Make us, good Lord, virtually participant of that holy sacrament this day, and every day make us all lively members, sweet Saviour Christ, of Thine holy mystical Body, Thy Catholic Church."

Waters from Heaven

Father Patrick Cummins wrote the following message to the children of the Crookston, Minn. diocese:

To children, lovers of the Bible, especially the Psalms:

Like the Mississippi, whose waters come from heaven to fill Lake Itasca, to flow through hundreds of miles, to be buried in the sea and to rise again to heaven, the Bible is a stream whose waters come from heaven to fill the worldwide Church, to flow through all the centuries, to be buried in Christ's tomb and to rise with Him into heaven.

Sail down this river, dear children, and sing as you go. An old lover of the Bible will be listening as you pass by Missouri.

The Strange Case of Father Weinzaepfel

The fascinating story of how a priest suffered for fulfilling his duty of hearing confessions just about 100 years ago.

George J. Corbett

THE romantic Wabash of song and story flows gently by historic Vincennes, Indiana, once a bustling frontier post, seat of government for the far-flung Northwest Territory, whence Lewis and Clark departed on their explorations and Bishop Simon Brute rode on horseback to his missions in the wilderness. It is a quiet sector of the Midwest now, this cradle of Catholicism above the Ohio River, as peaceful as the remains of the saintly old bishop who rests in the crypt of the cathedral he built when America was young.

But there was a day when the shocked eyes of the nation lay upon Vincennes and its environs. Bigotry undisguised ran riot here as elsewhere in the land in the mid 1840's. Prejudice, misrepresentation, dark suspicion, perjury had their day—and a man, the victim of barrel-head justice, was led away in chains. His name: Roman Weinzaepfel. His crime: he was a Catholic priest.

There is a point in telling the all-but-forgotten story of the pioneer priest whose bones are now interred in the Benedictine Abbey cemetery at St. Meinrad, Indiana. What our forefathers suffered for the faith must always be gratefully remembered. And there is a lesson to be learned: the story of Father Weinzaepfel could be repeated in our own day should bigotry be allowed to dominate the American scene

again.

Young Father Weinzaepfel was ordained a priest in the sanctuary of the Old Cathedral at Vincennes, April 5, 1840. He celebrated his First Mass two days later in a small side chapel of the cathedral on an altar that he had made himself from old boxes. The sanctuary of the cathedral had collapsed in the interim because of excavation work being done beneath the high altar; and the young priest, who was spending the night in adoration before the altar, had barely escaped with his life.

Roman Weinzaepfel was 27 years old at the time, a native of the Upper Rhine Valley of Germany. He had come to America as a missionary at the invitation of the Vicar General of Vincennes, Father de la Hailandiere, in the latter part of 1839. A subdeacon at the time, he was told to prepare immediately for his ordination.

The need for priests in the Vincennes area was acute. Father Weinzaepfel was assigned as assistant to Father Anthony Deydier, founder of Assumption parish in Evansville, Indiana, in order to care especially for the German Catholics there and in the surrounding counties.

Conditions were primitive in Evansville. The cornerstone for the new church had just been laid that year (1840), and it soon became evident that funds were running low. The con-

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gregation was poor and able to contribute only its manual labor. Debts increased, and the banks were demanding their money. Father Deydier determined to go east to solicit funds in the spring of 1842. Thus it was that Father Weinzaepfel found himself in full charge of the vast missionary district extending from the Ohio River to Vincennes and over into Illinois. It was during his pastor's absence in New York that the blow was struck that would mark the priest to his dying day.

In 1842, Martin Schmoll and Anna Maria Long were married before a squire in Evansville. Mr. Schmoll was a Protestant widower; Mrs. Schmoll, a nominal Catholic with a checkered background. When the bride's father came to Father Weinzaepfel asking that the marriage be annulled, the priest informed him that, according to the laws of the day, the marriage was valid, but that grievous sin had been committed in breaking the law of the Church. He further advised the father that he should induce the bridegroom to promise before two witnesses that he would not interfere with his wife's religion and that the children would be reared Catholic.

The scandal seemed to have been averted when Mrs. Schmoll appeared on the eve of the feast of the Ascension to make her confession. She insisted on being the last in line. While she was in the confessional, the other penitents finished their prayers and left the church.

A letter written by Father Weinzaepfel to his pastor in New York relates what occurred. The entire case against the priest was to turn upon the activities of these few moments. "... She said that she felt unwell and I told her to leave the confessional for a moment and get fresh air. . . . She

left, but soon returned. I did not look to see what she did. Her confession finished, she left the church at once, closing the north door after her with a bang. I waited a short time to see whether others were coming; then I arose, locked the door on the west, took off stole and surplice, fed my horse, and went over to the brothers Heinrich and ate my supper. I could see sufficiently well without a lamp or light."

Early Friday morning (two days later) Schmoll woke up the priest and accused him of insulting and wronging his wife. The priest denied the charge and went with Schmoll to confront his wife. They found her in bed, suffering, it would seem, from the alleged improprieties. The priest was about to summon a doctor to examine the woman, but Schmoll himself dissuaded him, saying that after she had time to reflect, his wife would probably retract her accusations. It was pure deception, a trap, as it developed later; for it was the husband himself who authored the entire plot against the priest and forced his wife to swear that the priest had committed a crime on her while she was in a faint. Schmoll's motive appears to have been a purely personal hatred of the priest, upon which bigoted non-Catholics capitalized as the days went by.

Father Weinzaepfel sensed the seriousness of the situation and intended to seek the bishop's advice immediately; however, he was called to baptize a baby in Blue Grass, a settlement outside the city. His adversaries later interpreted this move as an attempt to escape, but the priest had told Schmoll's father-in-law among others where he was going. While at Blue Grass, quietly reciting his breviary as he waited for dinner, he was arrested and brought to court.

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"You can imagine," he wrote in the letter to Father Deydier, "how the manner of my return to Evansville rejoiced the enemies of our faith and filled the hearts of our good Catholics with consternation."

The recounting of events following upon the priest's arrest and arraignment reads like an incredible tale out of a dime novel. When Mrs. Schmoll was placed under oath at Evansville, she so bungled the story of her embarrassment at the hands of the priest that the lawyers themselves laughed. Suddenly Mr. Schmoll burst into the courtroom, swearing vengeance on the priest and threatening one and all for upsetting his wife. His followers, as if at a signal, rallied to his side, but the shillelahs in the hands of some stout Irish lads who had come to see justice done changed their minds. Dire threats were uttered against the defenders of the priest. The court was in such a state of melee that the trial was postponed until the following September. The priest's bail was doubled; and though they were told that their homes and property would be destroyed, the Catholics got together enough to put up the money for the priest's release.

Father Weinzaepfel wrote: "I tremble at the thought of the dangers to which my magnanimous friends exposed themselves for my sake; for this enraged mob was prepared for anything, and I asked to be sent to prison. Under the circumstances, however, the Catholics considered imprisonment my certain death. From the doors of many saloons they heard the cry: 'Whiskey on the death of the priest!' All the Catholics, and many whom I had never known to be Catholic, offered to pledge all their property for my bail. Even right-minded Americans joined with the Catholics in resisting

this brutal force. The courageous Irishmen showed such a determination that the mad mob left the court-room and suffered us to depart. . ."

But all was not finished yet. Out on bail, the priest went to a neighboring home of a Catholic family. Schmoll's partisans, now growing into a furious mob, gathered outside the house. The owner hid the priest in a closet under the stairs and threw open the doors and invited the crowd to come in and search for him. The ruse worked, and the mob set about looking for their intended victim in other Catholic homes.

Catholic and Protestant friends of the priest managed to get him out of Evansville and on his way to Vincennes that night. "During the night," the priest wrote, "the houses of many Catholics were searched, and the streets lit up with blazing torches in the hands of would-be murderers."

"Greater misfortune, I fear, is impending," he continued in his letter. "What injury have I brought upon the Church? How many sins would have been prevented if I had been prudent enough to have someone remain in the church until the last person had made her confession? It is true, my conscience does not reproach me with the horrible accusation which has been brought against me, since I entertained not a thought, nor spoke a single word, nor acted otherwise than duty before God obliged me to think, speak, or act. But how will it be possible to repudiate the foul charges before the court, when Schmoll's party uses violence to prevent legal investigation, and by threats deters those who could testify to the truth? . . ."

His fears were well founded. A series of postponements pushed the trial back into March, 1843. Interested parties used the respite to stir up

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every sort of bigotry. The editor of the now-defunct *Evansville Journal*, a Mr. Chandler, took over the office of prosecutor and filled the pages of his paper with all sorts of inflammatory material. Circulars and pamphlets appeared reviving old canards and ancient hatreds. One purporting to be written by Schmoll himself in defense of his wife and himself carried this literary gem:

"Oh! thou Right Reverend de la Hailandiere, Catholic Bishop of Vincennes, how shall I approach thy immaculate presence? Thou! who hast but to will to be obeyed! to nod! and thy poor, ignorant and deluded followers fall down and worship thee! thou hoary letcher, well has the divine writer characterized thee and thy polluted priesthood in the text with which I have headed this publication. (Jer. iii, 2) Thy priesthood who hast, through all time, filled the land with thy whoredoms and iniquities, whose lives have not only been a disgrace to religion, but to mankind — you cannot escape forever. God in his infinite wisdom has thus long suffered you to pollute the earth without totally destroying you, but divine vengeance is at hand—even now the laws of man are about exposing your fiendish and hellish wickedness — dost thou not tremble at the fate that awaits you and your miserable fraternity!"

At the request of the attorneys for the defense the case was removed from the *Evansville* courts on the plea that tempers were running too high there. It was a mistake; for the judge before whom the case was to be tried transferred it to his home town, Princeton, Indiana, where old puritanical hatred of everything Catholic reigned supreme at the time. Father Weinzaepfel, his health breaking under the strain, carried on his work Sunday

after Sunday in the country missions and made no effort to flee as his accusers half-hoped he would.

He was present in the Princeton courthouse when "The Case of the State against Roman Weinzaepfel" was called on March 5, 1844. The priest was ably defended by Protestant lawyers who pleaded for the jury to put aside their prejudices, divorce the Catholic Church from the case, and consider the evidence. But the court, overlooking obvious contradictions, turned a willing ear to the harangues of the lawyers for the prosecution. The closing address of the prosecuting attorney was a three-hour diatribe, an eloquent description of a heinous action that never occurred.

For example, Mr. Chandler for the prosecution, after dwelling at great length on a Catholic priest's alleged power to forgive sins and hinting darkly about a full-blooded priest's inability to preserve his chastity, interpreted for the court Weinzaepfel's visit to his Bishop at Vincennes as an attempt to seek exemption from civil jurisdiction. He said:

"It is an historical fact that the Catholic Church has claimed for its clergy exemption from civil jurisdiction. I by no means charge this to be the doctrine of the Church at this day; but the defendant is a young man, but recently come to this country, with no knowledge but what he has got from books while shut up, perhaps, in some monastic school. I believe he fled from a civil to an ecclesiastical jurisdiction. . ."

Similar statements made it clear that what was on trial was not a human being accused of a grievous crime, but the Catholic priesthood and the Church itself. The trial lasted four days; the jury consultation, 40 minutes. The verdict read as follows: "We, the

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jury, find the defendant guilty, as he stands charged in the first count of the indictment (i.e., rape), and sentence him to five years hard labor in the penitentiary."

On the morning following the verdict, a Sunday, Father Weinzaepfel was escorted from the Princeton jail by 24 armed men to a local blacksmith shop where he was put in irons and welded to another criminal who had been sentenced to two years' imprisonment for thievery. The smithy himself, as he tried to fit cuffs to the lean wrists of the priest, commented: "He is not the terrible man he is held to be!" The reaction had already begun to set in.

The prisoner, accompanied by the sheriff, was then taken by carriage to Evansville, where he was to be transferred to a river boat moving upstream to the prison at Jeffersonville, Ind. The sheriff had the conveyance stop often along the way to show off his prisoner to curious bystanders, but the exhibitions, we are told, met with a cool reception. The priest spent his time saying his office and his rosary. Even at Evansville, the scene of the so-called crime, the streets were all but deserted, Protestants ashamed at the turn things had taken, Catholics warned by their pastor, Father Deydier, to keep their tempers and to resign themselves to the hand of God. Many tears were shed at the sight of the priest boarding the ship for the trip up-river.

At the prison, Mr. Pratt, the warden, greeted the sheriff glumly, voicing an opinion of the proceedings that was rapidly becoming widespread: "You should have brought the judge, not the priest!"

The imprisonment lasted from March 12, 1844, to February 24, 1845. Decent people were outraged

at this miscarriage of justice and the apparent triumph of bigotry. From bishops, who offered to pawn their pectoral crosses in his defense, to priests who continued to gather mounting evidence in his favor, and people, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, came numerous marks of sympathy and affection for the prisoner. Shortly after the trial and partly because of the facts brought to light there, Schmoll and his wife became enmeshed in divorce proceedings. The charges and counter-charges of infidelity and brutality disgusted the few good people who were still in doubt. The true character of the priest's accusers came to light. Soon 600 Protestant ladies of Evansville were petitioning Governor Whitcomb for the priest's liberation. But the Governor, himself a Protestant, put off the action for political reasons, fearing that it would affect the hotly-contested Whig-Democratic presidential election of that year (1844).

In February, 1845, the newly-elected President (James Polk) and his wife passed the Jeffersonville prison in their presidential steamer. Governor Whitcomb was accompanying them as a representative of the State of Indiana. As the boat passed, he pointed the prison out to them.

"Is not that the prison in which the Catholic priest is?" Mrs. Polk asked. "He is universally believed to be innocent."

"Very true," the Governor replied. "I have convinced myself of that fact. Besides, I have received a petition to liberate him. It was signed by 600 ladies of Evansville."

"And yet you say he is in prison!"

"This very afternoon, immediately upon my return home, I will grant him his liberty."

And so it was done.

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The question comes up in reviewing the strange case of Father Weinzaepfel: why was not Mrs. Schmoll indicted for perjury and made to pay to the full extent of the law? Some of the eminent Catholic churchmen of the day, the fiery Dr. Martin Spalding among them, were for giving the case a complete airing as a lesson to American bigots. But wiser heads prevailed. Protestants were sick of the case and little would be gained by reminding them of it. Persons in high standing who had either acknowledged their mistake or had recognized the priest's innocence by kindness and respect toward Catholics in general and the poor victim in particular would be seriously compromised by a new suit. Besides, in the infant American Church of that day, the funds that would have had to be expended on another lawsuit could better be used elsewhere.

Father Weinzaepfel labored zealously for nearly 30 years following his imprisonment as a missionary pastor in the Vincennes diocese. Finally at the age of 61, he was granted the wish he had been denied after his release from prison in 1845, that of joining a

religious community. He took his vows as a Benedictine monk at St. Meinard on December 8, 1874. There he lived in relative peace and quiet until his death in his eighty-third year, on November 11, 1895—a living memorial through the years of the colorful days when America was young and "papist" priests were a problem!

Later that same year, in addition to the evidence already amassed, a complete exoneration of the priest was obtained under unusual circumstances at St. Charles, Mo. Boasting about his exploits in what he considered the safe company of other Protestants, Martin Schmoll described fully how he had engineered the conviction and imprisonment of the priest by means of "conspiracy and perjury." The signed testimony of four Protestant men of St. Charles county, Mo., to whom Schmoll had revealed his methods, cleared the name of the Indiana priest completely. The *Indiana State Sentinel* (of Indianapolis) and the *Indiana Statesman* (of New Harmony) published extracts from the voluminous documents to prove Weinzaepfel's innocence once and for all.

Black and White

It may never have occurred to those who are prejudiced against the colored race that in countries where dark skins predominate, a fair complexion may be nothing to boast of. Many white people throughout history have used the word black to denote something undesirable, such as blacklist, blackball, blackmail, black market, black sheep, etc., but the following incident reminds us that white may not represent perfection in Ethiopia.

A white girl, secretary to the Ethiopian delegation to the United Nations, won the admiration of many of the Asian and African UN delegates by her devotion to equality and human rights. But she became really conscious of the meaning of color in the minds of different races when the Prince of Yeman paid her his greatest compliment:

"You may have a white skin but you have a black heart."



readers retort

In which readers are invited to comment on views and opinions expressed in *The Liguorian*. Letters to the editors must be signed and the address of the writer must be given, though both name and address will be withheld from publication on request.

Long Island, N. Y.

"For years I have been interested in Hilaire Belloc's battle for the faith. I was glad to see that you noticed his merit under the appropriate title, 'A Good Fighter Gone.' But in enumerating his writings, you failed to mention his book 'The Jews.' He wrote it in 1922. At that time he considered it a very pertinent and necessary treatment of the Jewish problem. The relevance of that problem has increased. Christians would be helped today by a knowledge of Belloc's sound ideas on the subject. Yet the book is practically suppressed. If you felt equal to writing an article on Belloc you must have known about this book. But you exclude it from the article. You keep Christians in the dark about it. You hide a phase of Belloc's work which he considered important. You did Belloc and Christianity a grave injustice. . . .

E. F. B."

Belloc wrote 153 books. We published an article of some six pages on his work. It was impossible to analyze every volume he wrote, or even every kind of topic he treated. Our comment was on what struck us as his most important contributions, and we readily yield to the opinions of others in this judgment.

The editors

State Prison

"While I am an inmate of a state pris-

on, I've been a convert to Catholicism for one year, and before that I had never deigned to so much as glance at a publication of any religion. Now, with the ever continuing new wonders that I find from week to week, I've found THE LIGUORIAN which seems to me to express best of all the simple truths of the way a Catholic should think and reason. I've a very sincere sorrow that I was not exposed to such reading in my earlier years and an even deeper sorrow that it took me thirty-six years to find the Catholic faith. During that time I was in three penitentiaries (for which I'm heartily ashamed) but what I'm trying to say is, had I been raised and instructed in the doctrines of the Catholic faith, instead of in a hit-and-miss kind of religion and in public schools where I heard God sneered at as a weakness and made the butt of jokes, I would never have seen the inside of the first prison I was sent to. It is with an awareness of my own inadequacies ever to become really worthy of the faith I have found, that I will state to anybody that if light and awakening can come to one so far down the way of perdition as I was, then truly there is no one past hope. It is of concern to me that good Fathers, engaged as you are in a labor of dedication, should know the help you bring us, so long abandoned to 'worldly-wise' and sophisticated publications that do so much to contribute to our state of mind. It is

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what the world considers *normal* that has led many, even as me, to prison and disgrace. God's blessing on your saving work. If ever I am free, you will have a life-long subscriber.

N. N."

There is a better sermon here than we have ever preached and a better article than we have ever written. Read it over again, mothers and fathers of growing children.

The editors

Flint, Michigan

"I'm getting sick and tired of the Catholic religion tearing down all other religions. People of other religions are just as proud and have just as much faith in their religions as we have in ours. With all the sickness, trouble and death in the world it seems like such a little and childish thing to argue over which form of the Lord's prayer is correct. Also arguing about which is the true religion. Why not spend our time on something more worthwhile? You've heard the old saying, 'Actions speak louder than words.' Maybe if we followed that we would have more people joining our Church. Instead of going around and bragging that ours is the true religion, why not show it by being good Catholics, spreading and explaining our beliefs? Some time ago you published an article on the Mormons. My brother is a Mormon priest and I am going to show it to him. And please answer me one question: Where is the word Catholic found in the Bible or any proof that ours is the true religion?

Miss W. G."

We are in hearty accord with this correspondent that good example is the most powerful means of conversion. But there must be a truth to which one can be converted, and Christ preached and taught for three years to make it known. Moreover errors of belief must be revealed for what they are before people will abandon them. In answer to the last question in the above letter, we ask the lady to read the articles

in back LIGUORIANS entitled "Must You Be a Catholic?" (September, 1953) "The Very Name Catholic," (July 1953) and "The Name Roman Catholic" (September, 1953).

The editors

Brooklyn, N. Y.

"The last paragraph of the article in the November issue on 'Burial or Cremation for Infants' interested me greatly. All the interpreters of Canon 747 seem to hold for the obligation of conditional baptism and burial for any miscarried embryo or unformed foetus. Your statement that 'there is no obligation of baptism or burial in cases of early miscarriage in which it is impossible to distinguish any formed foetus or body' caused quite a discussion in our mothers' club.

Rev. R. S. L."

Our wording would have been more accurate and less open to misunderstanding, had we said "In cases of doubtful miscarriage, in which it is impossible to discover the foetus, etc." If the foetus cannot be discovered there is no obligation, as may happen in the case of sudden hemorrhages when there is no expert help at hand.

The editors

St. Paul, Minn.

"Congratulations to N. M. whose letter in Readers Retort said exactly what I felt about your magazine. You are indeed overbearing, overstating cases, and in many instances lacking in charity. However, I congratulate you for publishing her letter and for taking her criticism in the spirit you did. Recent issues have reflected the sincerity of your intention to avoid future rash judgments and uncharitableness. Everybody wants you to call black black and white white but too often your emphasis has been on 'Do this because the Church commands it and you are bound to obey.' I don't like to think of it in that way. I desire to be good because I love God and want Him to love me. . . . Why do you call your letters

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to the editors 'Readers Retort?' It makes me feel I am quarrelling with you, which I don't want to do. Anyway I really liked your last issues, and will be renewing, not cancelling, my subscription.

C. H."

It is not easy to call black black and white white without making red appear before some eyes. We shall keep trying, though Readers Retort is called that because it is an invitation to any reader to take up anything we say and to offer evidence that we are wrong or theologically uncharitable in saying it. We do not want to appear to be asking only for approving letters, though we deeply appreciate the large number of such that are sent in.

The editors

Toronto, Ont.

"In the midst of reading Readers Retort in the October issue I pause to observe: The subject of having some pictures in THE LIGUORIAN prompts me to remark that I would like to see the picture of N. M. who wrote with such excellent adjectives in approval of *Atlantic Monthly* and in disparagement of THE LIGUORIAN. This is the type of person who surely needs less and less of *Atlantic Monthly* and similar publications and more and more of THE LIGUORIAN to get his or her Catholic thinking processes on the right track. How many need to hear the truth even when it hurts. I surely would like to see the pictures of the editors somewhere in THE LIGUORIAN at least once, to have a glimpse of those who give us so much help.

J. J. Mc."

It is a tradition with Redemptorists to prefer to remain pictorially anonymous when possible, in order to keep themselves conscious of their mission to preach Christ crucified and not themselves. This tradition may be broken in behalf of individuals and for special reasons, but we have preferred to observe it in THE LIGUORIAN up to now.

The editors

St. Louis, Mo.

"As a convert I find THE LIGUORIAN very enlightening and inspiring. However, in the October issue I found two conflicting statements on which I would appreciate a clarification. In the article 'Priests and Money,' you state that no priest is bound to give up money that his family passed on to him. In the article on 'Religious Priests, Brothers and Sisters' you state that 'every religious priest, brother and sister pronounces the vow of poverty.' It was my understanding that order priests take the vow of poverty, while secular priests do not.

Mrs. C. M."

In the first instance referred to here, we were speaking only about secular or diocesan priests. In the second instance the phrase "religious priests" means the same as order priests in so far as taking a vow of poverty goes. However the vow of poverty differs for different religious groups. Some are strictly called "orders" and they may take a vow of poverty that deprives them even of ownership of anything. Others, called congregations, usually take a vow of poverty by which they retain ownership of family inheritances, but renounce any independent use of their money.

The editors

Kansas City, Mo.

"Seeing the beating you all take every month from a few readers is a great encouragement to pastors who are trying to form a Christian flock: the pruning does cause some bleeding, no matter how gently one tries to do it, and I'm not always gentle. You people sometimes take more abuse in a month than we ever get in a year. You show the uncompromising theology of the Redemptorists tempered with a truly Christian charity. Somewhere in the field of Catholic monthlies there must be one that arises above the wishy-washy, avoid-touchy-subjects approach if we are to develop into saints, and we must have a

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nucleus of saints to prove it is possible. You have it—hang on and pray like crazy. When you raise your bloodied heads remember you are encouraging us. God bless your sense of humor. Some of your readers (to whom I gave THE LIGUORIAN) are extravagantly grateful to you for their changed outlooks, and you have many daily prayers rising from this little group.

Rev. N. N."

Nothing could be more heart-warming to us than the knowledge that we are helping pastors in their work for souls. The knocks we receive, though they represent only about one letter out of fifty sent to us, keep us and all pastors and good Catholics mindful of our task of trying "to win all for Christ."

The editors

Baltimore, Md.

"One wonders if those people who criticize your articles 'For Wives and Husbands Only' ever listen to the radio or watch television or read a newspaper. If they do, how come they get goose pimples from reading THE LIGUORIAN? As for the lady who was concerned about her grandchildren's morals and therefore did not want them to read THE LIGUORIAN's explanations of right and wrong in marriage, did she ever listen to a teen-agers' conversation? Personally, I am thankful that you do print such instructions, because I happen to have been a victim of the old idea of confusing ignorance with innocence. THE LIGUORIAN has answered many a question for myself and my children. Please make this anonymous if you decide to publish it.

N. N."

It is difficult to see how many people can escape wrong ideas about sex and marriage today, unless they can be kept away from all newspapers and so-called popular magazines. The flood of material published on the Kinsey reports is only the latest example of the type of thing that does great harm to young and old. THE LIGUORIAN

tries to offset this with straightforward Christian instruction.

The editors

Detroit, Mich.

"My husband and I read and enjoy THE LIGUORIAN very much. It has been a source of enlightenment, and we like your 'to the point' way of writing. Would you please tell me, if a person makes a promise to God or the Blessed Mother to say certain prayers each day, would it be a serious sin to break that promise? Also, is it always necessary to obtain the bishops' permission to re-enter the Catholic faith if one has committed the sin of abortion?

Mrs. R. S."

Promises to God bind only to the extent in which the promiser reasonably and consciously binds himself. In a sufficiently serious matter, or for a high spiritual motive, one can bind himself to fulfill a promise to God under pain of mortal sin. Ordinarily, this is not done, and should be done only with the consent of a confessor. . . . Abortion is a sin that is punished by excommunication from the Church, which excommunication can be lifted only by a bishop or one who has been given the power to dispense from it. Certain priests have the power to dispense from this excommunication at all times others have it at certain times and occasions of the year. The penitent who confesses abortion to a priest may safely leave it to him either to exercise the power of absolution if he has it, or to obtain the power if he does not.

The editors

Minneapolis, Minn.

"The format of THE LIGUORIAN suits me just as it is. In the interest of good taste, text space, economy and distinctiveness, I hope its value will not be deteriorated by the introduction of illustrations. The cover is not important—readers take it for what is inside.

Miss K. G."

The Power of Hope

Quotations and stories from real life, designed to foster practices that should be second nature to the Christian.

John P. Schaefer

From your catechism you have learned, and years of living your faith have taught you, that though you live in a material world, yet you are destined for something spiritual, something supernatural. And the Christian virtue of hope is frequently a star leading you on, assuring you that heaven can and will one day be yours, that God will constantly be watching over you, granting every assistance that you need to attain the high goal of your life.

But all too often, the sufferings and cares, the routine and monotony of every-day life, the weakness of your will and the demands of your body cloud your vision and shut out all realization of spiritual things, even shadow your life with despair. For this reason we here print a group of incidents and stories, and ask you to reflect for a moment upon them and to apply them to your own life. May they be an inspiration to you; may they remind you a bit more of the meaning of the virtue of hope in your life.

During a catechism lesson, the sister was narrating to the class the story of the passion of Christ. When she came to the words: 'Judas was seized with despair, and hanged himself', she asked one of the pupils what he would have done had he been Judas.

The little boy replied: "I would have hanged myself to the neck of the good Jesus until He forgave me."

A huge liner was plowing its way

through the sea, tossed about as though it were a nutshell by heaving waves lashed up by a terrible hurricane. The horrified passengers became panic-stricken, shouting and screaming. But during the uproar one among them maintained his calm. It was a little boy, who played quietly during the whole storm. At last the vessel reached port safely. One of the passengers, curious, asked the little child how he had been able to remain so calm in the face of such danger, whether he had not been afraid.

"Afraid?" the child replied disarmingly. "Why, my father is the captain of the ship."

The famous astronomer, Leverrier, was once complimented by one of his contemporaries: "Sir, it cannot be said of you what is said of many others, that you have raised yourself to the clouds. You have raised yourself even to the stars."

"My dear sir," the astronomer replied, "that is not sufficient. I mean to ascend still higher. I meditate on an enterprise of much more importance. Yes, I mean to rise higher than the stars. I mean to ascend to heaven itself, and I hope you will assist me by your prayers."

Ideals are like the stars. We never reach them, but like the mariners on the sea, we chart our course by them.

A farmer once hid a great treasure upon his property. When about to die

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he called his three lazy sons to his bedside to impart the secret to them.

"A great treasure lies hidden on the estate which I am about to leave you," he began.

"Where is it hidden?" they exclaimed in one breath.

"I am about to tell you," said the old man. "You will have to dig for it."

But his breath failed him and before he could impart the secret, he fell back upon his pillow, dead. The sons set to work at once with spade and mattock on the long neglected fields. They turned up every piece of sod and clod. But they found no treasure. They did, however, learn how to work, and when the fields were sown and the harvest came, the yield was prodigious because of their thorough tilling. Then it was that they discovered the promised treasure.

Boswell once asked Johnson if there were no possible circumstances in which suicide would be justifiable.

To this the great man answered: "No."

"Well," said Boswell, "suppose a man had been guilty of fraud which he was certain would be discovered?"

"Why, then," replied Johnson, "in that case let him go to some country where he is not known, and not to the devil where he is known."

"If the wrong side of heaven is so beautiful," exclaimed a little girl, looking up at the stars, "what must be the right side?"

In Japan, people used to buy a one-way ticket to a volcano. The railroad company thought itself cheated, for many passengers weren't taking the train back. They were inside the volcano as suicides. So the company built 'Wait-a-bits,' little boxhouses, near the volcano. Here the would-be suicide

was invited to stay in a 'Wait-a-bit' to pause for reflection, to quiet hysteria. Already more than two thousand passengers have thought better of it and have bought their return ticket.

In his extreme old age, John Quincy Adams was one day slowly and feebly walking down a street in Boston. An old friend met him and, shaking his trembling hand, asked:

"And how is John Quincy Adams today?"

"Thank you," said the ex-president, "John Quincy Adams is well, quite well, thank you. But the house in which he lives is at present becoming quite dilapidated. It is tottering at its foundations. Time and the seasons have nearly destroyed it. Its roof is pretty well worn out. Its walls are much shattered, and it trembles with every wind. The old tenement is becoming almost uninhabitable, and I think John Quincy Adams will have to move out of it soon. But he himself is quite well, quite well."

To all of these practical lessons of hope and confidence in the providence of God, we urge you to add the most convincing of all — the words of Jesus Christ the Son of God. Take out your Bible, open it at the Gospel according to St. Luke, chapter 10, verse 22, and there read the immortal lesson of hope. The words were spoken by Christ two thousand years ago, but they were spoken for you.

To the strength of these words of Christ, to the convictions of your own mind, add but one little practice. When the cares and sufferings, the routine and monotony of every day life weigh upon you, when, as they say, you are 'down in the dumps,' lift yourself up with a little prayer. It will not only give you the strength and help which every

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prayer gives, but it will be a reminder to you that there is more to your life than a mere day-to-day existence, more to it than just making a living, than tending a home. It will remind you that all of this is for something greater, something more glorious and

beautiful than your wildest dreams.

We now invite you to reread the preceding stories and incidents, to apply your thoughts about them to your own life. And, by the way, don't forget to read that part of the Bible — St. Luke, chapter 12, verses 22 to 34.

Unfit For Marriage

Very sound, it seems to us, is the following advice from marriage counsellors Samuel G. and Esther B. Kling, taken from one of their columns in the Chicago *Daily News*:

You aren't ready for marriage, the Klings say, if . . .

You're quick to criticize others.

You find it difficult to forget and forgive a slight.

Your feelings are easily hurt if someone criticizes you.

You become jealous easily.

You usually insist on having your way.

You feel that people are always taking advantage of you.

You believe your point of view is the only correct one.

You believe the majority of people are dishonest and deceitful.

You frequently engage in emotional outbursts.

You avoid responsibility in your job or at home.

You often become moody or depressed for no apparent reason.

You go out of your way to defy accepted customs and traditions.

You usually blame everyone but yourself when things go wrong.

The implication of course is that the faults and failings represented here will add greatly to the difficulty of adjustment in marriage.

Ten Commandments of Married Life

1. I am the spouse thou hast married. Thou shalt set no other interests in life before me, not parents, people, job or hobbies.

2. Thou shalt not raise thy voice at me.

3. Remember, WE keep holy the sabbath.

4. Honor thy father and mother-in-law.

5. Thou shalt not kill our love with selfishness.

6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

7. Thou shalt not steal my faith in God.

8. Thou shalt not tell my faults to anybody.

9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's spouse.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

—Catholic Men

For Non-Catholics Only

F. M. Louis

"Nobody Can Dictate to Me"

Objection: I call myself a Christian, but I would never be a Catholic because I don't hold with anyone telling me what I have to believe. The Catholic Church tells her members they have to believe certain things or go to hell. That's not for me; I believe what I please.

Answer: This objection reveals a certain amount of confusion about a very basic question, namely, is Christianity a mere sentiment, or is it objective truth?

Many people in our modern day hold that Christianity is merely a feeling, a sentiment; the function of religion, they say, is to make a man feel good inside. That is their only purpose in going to church and in giving any attention to religion at all. As for accepting a definite set of dogmas or beliefs, this, they say, they could never bring themselves to do.

The attitude towards religion here described is that of course, of the so-called "liberals," because in all things, including even the question of God's existence, the "liberal" keeps an "open mind;" he refuses to accept any truth as absolute, eternal and unchangeable.

The Catholic, on the other hand, holds it as basic that there is such a thing as objective truth, that it is possible for the human mind to find that truth, and that, once the mind has found it, truth requires that it be accepted and believed. Among such objective, eternal, unchanging truths are the facts that God exists, and that God became man, that the God-Man founded a Church which He authorized to teach in His name, and to which He clearly wanted all men to belong. As He Himself said, speaking to the apostles, who were the first leaders of that Church: "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved; he who does not believe shall be condemned."

In the light of these facts, the Catholic view is that anyone who holds religion to be a mere sentiment or feeling is making a mockery out of Christ and the things He said and did. Sentiment and feeling may come and go; the essential substance of religion is based on belief and conduct.

Happenings in Rome

Monthly round-up of significant events in the capital of Christendom.

Christopher D. McEnniry

Message to Australia:

On the occasion of the closing of the great National Eucharistic Congress at Sidney, Australia, the voice of the Common Father, Pope Pius XII, was heard by the men "down under."

"This," he said, "is a day of remembrance for you, Our dearly beloved children of Australia, — blessed memories that stir the soul to songs of praise and thanksgiving to God . . .

"One hundred and fifty years ago the first Holy Mass was offered on your shores, and one can well imagine the deeply-felt emotions of the sacrament-hungry exiles, when they were at last granted their most prized privilege to bow in adoration before the Divine Victim of Golgotha raised aloft in the hands of their priest. Their Eucharistic Lord was with them again. The Holy Mass had forged a link uniting them with their dear ones far over-seas, and surely the hills and dales of their native land (Ireland) were heard to echo the joy that filled their hearts . . .

"The Mass, your daily Mass, carries the memory back far beyond the brief span of a century and a half. It transports you in spirit to 'a large upper room, furnished,' of a house in Jerusalem. It is Thursday night almost two thousand years ago. Jesus had eaten the Paschal Lamb with His Apostles. 'Then He took bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them saying: This is My Body which is to be given for you: Do this to remember me . . .'

"And how staunchly Australia's priests and people have remembered! Here for the world to read and heed is

the story of your abiding devotion to Holy Mass through the arduous pioneer years of your national life. Here for the world to see and hear, in this hour of abundant grace and opportunity, is the vast (Eucharistic) Congress of your sons and daughters. . . . But let the world realize with Us, for its further consolation and assurance, that you are assembled here in prayerful, apostolic readiness today for much more than a feast of remembrance. This is a solemn hour of resolution too. For Australia, as for every member in the Lord's great family of souls, Jesus Christ can be no mere memory, however tenderly and tenaciously enshrined in the pages of our history . . .

"The impact on human history of this sacrificial, all-embracing love of the Eucharistic Christ, alive in the hearts of His holy priests and lay apostles, has been, as Our beloved Australia knows so well, tremendous. And who shall set bounds to the conquests of this Loving Heart for tomorrow? If only your resolution is strong, if only your hearts fail Him not by disdaining the all-powerful aid of His grace, the charity of Christ will continue, through you and your children, its blessed mission of unity and peace unto the final rescue of the world from the powers of darkness that threaten its ruin. It will fortify the precious bonds of your family life and keep the Christian Home the sanctuary of prayer, labor and love that God intended it to be. It will transform your industrial relations, your economic and political planning, by setting at their very heart the needs

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and sacred prerogatives of the human person. It will supply exactly the warmth and power you need for the task of international forbearance, sympathy and conciliation traced for you of late by your devoted hierarchy.

"O Sacrament most Holy, O Sacrament divine,

All praise and all thanksgiving be every moment thine."

Encouragement For Poland:

This is not the first time poor Poland, in her long hectic history, was ruled by bad men. Seven hundred years ago King Boleslaw II, a cruel and lustful master, was oppressing the Poles. Stanislaus, the Bishop of Cracow, boldly expostulated with the King, and, that failing, excommunicated him. While the Bishop was saying Mass Boleslaw burst into the church and slew him, and his blood stained the holy altar. The Polish people, never supine under oppression, rose up in their indignation and drove the murderer out of the country.

They are now celebrating the seven hundredth anniversary of the death of the illustrious Polish martyr, St. Stanislaus. Despite the crushing weight of the iron curtain, the Bishops of Poland of today, still carrying the torch of their great predecessor, called for a national celebration of the event.

The Pope wrote to congratulate the Bishops on their devotion to that other Bishop who had given his flock an example of unbreakable firmness and, rather than prove recreant to his duty, had risked his life and crowned it by glorious martyrdom.

The Pope told them that, in like calamities today, they will give a like example to their people and leave a like heritage to history. He cited St. Hyacinth, St. Ceslaus, St. Hedwig, St. Iolanta, St. Bronislaw and a long list

of saints and martyrs who shine like stars in Poland's crown.

"Well aware," the Pope continued, "that the invincible right hand of Christ is with you, fearless in the face of danger, you will persevere in fighting the battle of the Lord; let your confidence be like the solid granite; let no injury or insult stop you from loving your enemies; let your hope, even when all seems lost, outshine in splendor the sun; be strong in your principles and tireless in your devotedness, and look with a calm and serene mind to a happy future. Remember that we are called to fight for the living God so that, sin and death being overcome, we may hoist the victorious banners of truth and love. Be immovable as the anvil beneath the hammer's blows. The great tribulations you undergo will bring forth great fruits . . .

"In tender love for the gentle Mother of God no nation surpasses you, and few are your equals. May this merciful Virgin look down propitiously upon the people of Poland who have recourse to her and be their strong defense, their glory and their crown."

For Shut-ins:

After visiting the shrines of Lourdes, Fatima, Loreto and Rome, the sick (many on stretchers) were brought in to the presence of the Pope.

"We are happy to extend a very special welcome," the Pope said, "to the first National Pilgrimage of Invalids to the Shrines of Europe sponsored by the Confraternity of Pilgrims in the United States of America. In particular it is a great joy for Us to greet those of you who have endured great sacrifice, and even pain, to come from your homes thousands of miles away on a long and difficult journey in order to visit the Vicar of Christ.

"We know that you are members of

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the League of Shut-in Sodalists, which was founded largely through the persevering efforts of one of you, Our beloved daughter, Mary Ellen Kelly. We are sure that your visits to the sacred shrines and to the eternal city have given you a new courage and strength to bear the sufferings that God has been pleased to ask of you.

"You are especially dear to the heart of Our Divine Master, to His Blessed Mother, and also to Us, for with St. Paul We may say to you: 'The grace that has been granted to you is that of suffering for Christ's sake, not merely believing in Him.' Treasure this suffering that is yours through God's will; bear it always in union with Our suffering Lord, offering it to Him for the increase and sanctification of the members of His Body, which is the Church (St. Paul). In the words of St. Peter, the first Vicar of Christ, We exhort you: 'Do not be surprised, beloved, that this fiery ordeal should have befallen you to test your quality; there is nothing strange in what is happening to you. Rather rejoice when you share in some measure the sufferings of Christ; so joy will be yours, and triumph, when His glory is revealed.'

"Carry this message of Ours back to the other members of your sodality and League of Shut-in Sodalists who could not make this pilgrimage with you. And now, in a very special way and with all Our heart, We bless you and them and all your loved ones, as well as all those who have helped to make this pilgrimage possible, and all those who have come with you."

Concordat With Spain:

After years of study and negotiations a new and complete "concordat" has been drawn up and signed by the Holy See and Spain.

What is the use of a concordat? It prevents misunderstandings. In a Catholic country the government just can't keep its hands out of ecclesiastical affairs. It can do much to help the Church. It can do much to hamper the Church. A concordat gives both sides the satisfaction of knowing just where they stand.

This concordat, for example, deals with: the selection of Bishops (The Government always wants to have as much say as possible in that); the tenure of Church property; exemption from certain taxes; exemption of priests and seminarians from military service; marriage laws; lawsuits; traditional privileges; pious bequests; schools, colleges, universities; diocesan boundaries; preservation of ancient churches of great historical value; appointment and jurisdiction of military chaplains; provision of chaplains for hospitals, orphanages, prisons; creation of a mixed commission to settle doubts about the meaning of the concordat:

Siamese Redemptorists:

L'Osservatore Romano, semi-official organ of the Vatican, carried an interesting article about the hard life and the fruitful labors of the American Redemptorists in Thailand (Siam): They have a much-frequented temporary church in the capital city, Bangkok. The nature of this temporary location is evident from the name which the people give to the church — Our Lady of the Garage. In the rough interior of Siam they have a house from which they take care of ten villages separated from one another by endless miles of almost impassable roads or paths.

We were particularly gratified to read this article printed in the eternal city, for these Redemptorist Missionaries are college companions of the editors of THE LIGUORIAN.



THOUGHTS for the SHUT-IN

L. F. Hyland

The Apostolate of the Sanitarium

People who are temporary or chronic invalids from one cause or another may be divided into two groups, i.e., those who are able to remain in their homes, and those who must spend the period of their illness, whether long or short, in a sanitarium or hospital.

Most of the sick, we presume, would prefer to remain in their own homes, but circumstances sometimes render it imperative for them to be taken where they can receive better and more efficient care and attention, and in such circumstances surely they should bow gracefully to the clear indication of God's will.

There is one special reason or motive for accepting the added cross of living among strangers, namely, that incalculable good may be accomplished by the truly unselfish shut-in in such a situation.

A hospital or a sanitarium is a little world in itself, as anyone who lives or works in such an institution quickly comes to realize. In that world, whether we consider the patients themselves, or those who work for them, there are all types of people. A Christian shut-in who really lives up to the name Christian can be an instrument for great good. He becomes such an instrument not by actual preaching (which in most cases would accomplish no good at all), but by the tremendous power of good example, than which indeed there is no greater power on earth to move men to what is right.

Doctors and nurses, hardened as they must necessarily become to human suffering, nevertheless often comment on the extraordinary patience of a sick person under their care; they are struck by it; it reveals to them the nobility of suffering, which perhaps they are inclined to forget.

As for the other patients with whom the shut-in comes into contact they find courage and inspiration in the daily example of one among them who does not complain or grumble, who accepts the discomforts and even agonies of sickness with patience and resignation, who even cheerfully overlooks and forgives actual neglect or mistreatment, and is kind at all times to all.

To reach such a goal, of course, is to become a saint, but we are not afraid to hold it out to shut-ins as the ideal which can translate their sickness into a veritable apostolate for Christ.



Sideglances

By the Bystander

It is always unpleasant to take issue with a fellow-priest engaged, as we are, in the apostolate of the pen. Sometimes it is necessary, however, in order to keep the light of truth shining clearly and, above all, to prevent a loss of souls. It is for these purposes that we sharply take issue with the quite well-known author, Rev. Gerald Vann, O.P., who has recently published a comforting essay for Catholics who are living in invalid marriages that cannot be made valid by the Church. His article first appeared in *Blackfriars*, a Dominican organ published in England. In January of this year it was condensed and published in *The Catholic Digest*, here in the United States, and was thus assured of a very wide reading. In it, Father Vann creates some entirely new theological and moral concepts, which, we are sure, will be rejected not only by us but by all Catholic spiritual and theological writers and thinkers; he lulls individuals who are living in a state of serious sin into a very sweet but fatal complacency; and he indirectly makes it a hundred times easier than it already is for Catholics to enter into invalid marriages. These indictments, if they can be proved, make the article morally pernicious and a great danger to souls.

We readily recognize the complicated human element, of which Father Vann makes much, in many of the bad marriages in which Catholics have become entangled. Our own heart has often bled with sympathy and the desire to offer comfort to couples that have come to us with the story that they were invalidly married and could not be validly married in the Catholic Church. We are moved by their tearful appeals to us to tell them of some way (short of their giving up each other and

the joys of marriage) in which they can be permitted to receive the sacraments of the Catholic Church once more. In many instances both persons are obviously wonderful individuals; they come from sterling Catholic families; they attend Mass regularly; give generously to charity; practice self-denial in various forms. Only one thing is wrong with them; they are living in a forbidden and invalid marriage. One is then conscious of the strong inclination to which Father Vann gave in, viz., to rationalize the situation, to make light of the sin of these wonderful people, to speak lulling and comforting words that will send them back home with the feeling that they are going to get by all right in the end. And it is only if one clings with all one's might to the eternal truths enunciated by Christ concerning the meaning of sin, the necessity of giving up everything (even mother and father, home and lands and possessions if necessary) for His sake, the dignity and laws of Christian marriage, the reality of heaven and hell, that one can be inspired to speak forthrightly to such couples of what they must do to turn from the wide way that leads to destruction to the narrow road that leads to God.

Father Vann used three principles as grounds for relieving pastors of the duty of advising the invalidly married to give up the pretense of marriage. His first principle is that sometimes an invalid marriage is subjectively good, (meaning the case in which the couple is unaware that there is something wrong with their marriage) or has a lot of goodness mixed up in it. Of course there is no problem concerning subjectively good marriages, so long as they may remain that way; the whole problem is

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with objectively and subjectively bad marriages, i.e., invalid marriages that those involved know to be invalid. Even in these, says Father Vann, there may be much that is good and, inferentially, much that relieves a pastor of the duty of warning the persons involved. They were entered in a moment of mental aberration; or because of "a very human inability to give up the love and happiness involved;" or because of "an unwillingness to make another person suffer." It is a little difficult to see how these circumstances put "much that is good" into a bad action, but Father Vann says they surely do much "to redeem the situation in the eyes of God." Does he mean by this that persons who deliberately enter a bad marriage because they are in love, or because they do not want to hurt their lover, and who remain in their bad marriage till death, will surely get to heaven? Is that not a typically secularistic idea, which contradicts some of the clearest words of Christ? Most invalid marriages into which Catholics enter are adulterous marriages, because one of the persons was validly married before. It was Christ who called them adulterous; and it was St. Paul who said bluntly that no unconverted adulterer will enter heaven. Are we to inject a new thought into the Bible, viz., that adulterers who are deeply in love with their partners in sin, or who don't want to hurt them, don't fall under the general condemnation of the revealed word of God?

The second principle that Father Vann uses to comfort invalidly married Catholics is that there is a contract made that must be fulfilled. True, he says, it is not a valid marriage contract in the eyes of the Church; but it is some kind of a personal contract. Then he speaks scornfully of moralists "who have not shrunk from asserting that a contract which is immoral is therefore invalid, not binding: a supremely abhorrent example of the kind of abstract theorizing

that pays no attention to the human realities of a human situation." We know of no moralist in the history of Christianity who has been tempted to shrink from asserting this basic principle of the natural law: "Immoral contracts cannot be binding in conscience." This does not mean that, if a man or woman has begotten children in an immoral marriage, they are free to renounce all responsibility to those children. But the responsibility arises not from a contract, but from responsible human actions. The dilemma therefore, that Father Vann sets up, is false and misleading. A Catholic living in an adulterous marriage is under a direct divine command to give up his adultery at any cost. If his past adulteries have brought children into the world, he is bound to provide for their upbringing as well as he can. But to say that he cannot thus provide for their upbringing without continuing in adultery is a tragic example of blindness to the meaning of sin.

The most startling and dangerous of Father Vann's principles is set down in these words: "The situation (of the invalidly married Catholic) necessarily precludes full communion in the Church's life, but does not necessarily preclude closeness to God." Then he sets down three conditions on which a Catholic, who is excluded by his publicly known sins from receiving the sacraments, can come closer to God (which, we assume, means that he need have no fear of losing his immortal soul.) The first is that he make use of constant prayers of sorrow, even while he continues habitually to commit mortal sins by using the rights of marriage. (In an invalid marriage every act of intercourse is a mortal sin, either of adultery or fornication, as the case may be.) This is the most preposterous spiritual recommendation that could be made. The simplest definition of sorrow for sin, even that offered to second grade children, includes essentially the notion of giving up

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sins and occasions of sin. It is impossible for a Christian to make an act of sorrow for a *future* sin already planned, to say nothing of a series of habitual sins. It is true that a man may make a sincere and practical act of sorrow for his past sins, determining never to fall again, and then later find himself falling through weakness. But that is entirely different from the case of the man who has no intention at all of giving up an invalid marriage or the pleasures thereof. This man cannot make an act of sorrow for his future sins; the only thing he can do is to pray for the grace to give up those sins and their occasion.

The second condition on which, according to Father Vann, "a Catholic living in a bad marriage can come close to God" is that, while he is breaking one law of God, he keep all the others. This is the comforting thought that most sinners press to their bosoms: "I don't break all God's laws," or "I break only one serious law of God." "I commit adultery but I never miss Mass." "I steal but I never get angry." Beyond all doubt persons who are living in mortal sin should be encouraged not to multiply their offenses against God for the reason that every new serious sin they commit lessens their chance of receiving enough grace to repent and reform from all their sins before they die. But it remains true that if there is one unrepented and unforgiven mortal sin on their soul when they die, they will be lost forever. . . . The third condition of closeness to God for the invalidly married is, according to Father Vann, that they think often of God's mercy and of the hope that goes with it. Yet one cannot even skim through the Gospels without realizing that the mercy of God is held out to the *penitent* sinner, not to the one who has adopted and is continuing in a way of sin.

We have felt it important to say these things because the one point in modern

life where there is the greatest danger that Christians will compromise with secularism is the point of sex and marriage. And the one most frequent surrender to evil and cause of scandal on the part of Catholics is through their entrance into invalid marriages. To comfort those who have done so with the pleasing doctrine that they can still remain close to God and need have no fear of losing their souls even though they live till death in their bad marriages, is disloyalty to Christ, a most horrible deception practiced on sinners, and a means of breaking down the whole Christian concept and ideal of marriage, which only the Catholic Church has guarded for nineteen hundred years. In individual cases it is not for any priest to make final judgment concerning souls. Ignorance, mental weakness, blinding and continuing passion, will all be taken into consideration in the judgment of God. But this is what must be taught the followers of Christ and the children of His Church: 1) Marriage was elevated into a sacrament by Jesus Christ, and a Catholic can enter it validly only in conformity with the laws of God and His Church, and before a priest and two witnesses. 2) A Catholic who enters an invalid marriage and continues to live in it as if married, is presumed to be living in a state of mortal sin, and may not receive any of the sacraments of the Church. 3) A Catholic who dies in an invalid marriage, i.e., after having publicly lived till death as if married to someone when actually marriage to that person was impossible according to the law of God, is presumed to have died as an enemy of God and may not be granted Christian burial. 4) Catholics living in invalid marriages (that cannot be validated) can be readmitted to the sacraments and the grace of God and the hope of heaven only on the conditions that they renounce forever all use of the rights of marriage with their forbidden partner, that they separate from the person at least to an extent that will render remote any danger of sin, that they

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remove or repair in some way the public scandal they have given. If children are involved, arrangements must always be made for their proper support and upbringing.



POINTS of FRICTION

L. G. Miller

On Getting Along With the Boss

Problem: I have a fairly good job, but I do find it difficult to get along with my boss. He is overbearing at times, and is not averse to showing favoritism towards some of the people who work for him.

Solution: Human nature being what it is, and the necessity of laboring for a livelihood being a penalty of original sin, one must expect difficulties of this sort to arise. Sometimes the aversion to one's boss may be the expression of one's growing distaste for the monotony and routine of daily tasks repeated over and over again. Unfortunately, modern working conditions in many instances tend to depersonalize the individual, and turn him into just another cog in the machine.

On the other hand, it may well be that the boss has his share and more than his share of human defects and failings, which provide an extra cross over and above the conditions of one's work.

In either case and in both cases, there is no easy formula by which one can meet the difficulties; they can be properly met and overcome only by the continued effort to exercise patience and charity.

To be patient means to accept such difficulties in a spirit of Christian resignation. We do not mean that a man should not, within reason, strive to better his position. But when he has done this, there will still be a wide field for the practice of truly Christian patience.

Added to this must be the exercise of charity. This virtue will require that one is quick to forgive personal affronts, and continues to exercise kindness and consideration even in the face of mistreatment. Our Lord Himself calls such charity "heaping coals of fire upon the adversary's head."

Even a few workers among many who are inspired with ideals such as these can accomplish wonders in attracting others to the Christian truths which are basic to peace and harmony in the world.



Catholic Anecdotes

All But One Thing

A priest was standing outside his poor little country church, talking to his parishioners about the need for church repairs. One of the men said:

"Father, I was reading about a Protestant church in America. It has identification neon signs, plate glass doors, check rooms for coats in nightclub style, sixty Sunday School rooms, a glass nursery for one hundred babies, and ninety-six loud speakers. There's a painting of the River Jordan behind the preacher's platform and real waterfalls flow into a huge marble baptismal which is circled by growing ferns and lilies. When new church members go into the font to be baptized, a red light for guilt shines on the water. As they are baptized, the light changes to blue and finally to white for purity. It holds thousands and must have cost a fortune."

An old woman who was standing by spoke up:

"Yes, a fortune. And yet," she looked lovingly toward the open door of the poor chapel where the red lamp could be seen before the tabernacle, "they haven't the one thing necessary. They haven't got Jesus on the altar."

Redemptorist Record

A Blow For Penance

When you were confirmed the Bishop hit you with his hand. Go to Rome, and they will hit you with a stick. Go into one of the great basilicas — St. Peter's, St. Mary Major — on certain penitential days. You will see a very important ecclesiastic sitting in

the confessional, reading his breviary, and, fixed in a socket beside him, something that resembles a long bamboo fishing rod. He is a "Grand Penitentiary." Not a *place* where they send horse-thieves, but a *man* with extraordinary faculties to forgive great sinners who are truly repentant. The word "penitentiary" comes from "penance." When he is not occupied with big sinners, he will receive little sinners, even those who do not need to receive the sacrament of penance. You just kneel on the pavement a few feet in front of the confessional. The Grand Penitentiary will finish his psalm, mark his place in the breviary, take the stick from its socket and give you a slight blow on the shoulder. If you are truly repentant, your little sins will be taken away, and you will receive a special indulgence. The explanation: Your action is a humble, public profession that you are a sinner. The blow with the stick symbolizes the penance or punishment which you acknowledge you deserve for your sins.

Angels By Mail

A certain priest found it necessary to send out some appeals for charity and said that he was sending his guardian angel along with each letter to keep it from premature burial in the waste basket. A little argument ensued about overworking his beloved guardian, to which the priest replied:

"If Bishop Sheen can send an angel out through his microphone and television camera, I can certainly send mine along on a postage stamp."

Quote



Pointed Paragraphs

Job for Readers — Not Writers

The observance of February as Catholic Press Month is a great concerted effort on the part of all Catholic publications to create readers out of non-readers, and to change readers of harmful and useless publications into readers of that which can bring real happiness into their lives.

It is not easy to create new readers nor to change old ones. People who read practically nothing are usually content with permitting action, work, amusement, idle conversation to fill up all the time not spent by them in sleep. They have no idea of what their minds can do, nor of how new knowledge could transform their entire outlook on everything in the world. These words will not impress them; somebody has to talk to them about what they are missing, to give them the living example of how reading brings about growth, development, maturity in any human being who reads wisely and well.

It is just as difficult to win over a reader of the wrong kind of published material to that which is worth while. Anybody who has grown accustomed to poring over sexy literature and picture books eventually pays the penalty of having a distaste for anything decent and helpful in the way of reading. Anybody who concentrates on romantic but unrealistic story books, or unstimulating but pacifying picture magazines, or wordy and worldly newspapers, will not come by himself to pick up and read material that can make him a better person and a happier child of

God.

That is why Catholic Press Month must really be observed by readers more than by writers. We can write endless tracts on the importance and rewards of good reading, but the people in the above two classes would never even see them if they were not prodded and awakened to know what they are missing by somebody who already knows by experience.

Talk up, therefore, all ye readers of *THE LIGUORIAN*. Tell the non-readers and the bad readers about your own personal experience. Explain something that you learned only from your reading to somebody who is ignorant and misinformed and also miserable. Catholic Press Month is for you!

The Dangers of February

February is an in-between month. It is between January, when people are inclined to make resolutions for the new year, and March, which is the beginning of Lent this year, and when in consequence people are inclined to work for their souls through penance and mortification.

The most dangerous times in life are the in-between times — the times when there is no special reason for making a special effort to do good and to be good. Vacation is such a time — the period between school terms or work terms. Right after Christmas and right after Easter are such times too.

But February is the worst of all. The weather (generally damp and slushy and miserable) conspires to aid the cause of indifference and spiritual en-

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nui. The trees are naked and devoid of life. The sky is more often than not filled with clouds that persist in sending down snow or rain or sleet. The winds moan their weird and mournful cries. Boots and scarfs and heavy coats must be worn to ward off pneumonia. Nature herself seems to take out after man to make him just as bedraggled in spirit as she is in appearance. She tugs at his optimism; she depresses his mind; she dampens his enthusiasm.

The strength of a man's moral fibre can be determined in February. If he says, "I made a good start in January, and I intend to do something special during Lent; but I'll coast for a month now," he is proving that there are some weak spots in his make-up. He is not proving that he is a very small man by such an attitude, but he is proving that he is not a very big man. Bigness does not depend on seasons.

It is a wonderful thing to go to Mass and Communion every morning during February as well as during Lent and the month of May. It is a wonderful thing to check on one's resolutions and firmly to renew them during February as well as during the first month of the year.

Coasting in the spiritual life is always dangerous. So much ground is lost and at so fast a pace as to make it nigh to impossible for a man to regain what was lost except through tremendous effort. The whole hill must be climbed again. Beware of February. It's an in-between month.

Pin-Up Calendars

A calendar is a sufficiently innocent article in itself; in fact, though it is undoubtedly necessary, it might also be called uninspiring. Perhaps this is why calendar printers and publishers make such heroic efforts each year to dress up their calendars with suitable designs

and illustrations and pictures.

On calendars you will find pictures of sunsets and storms at sea and race horses and little pigs. On calendars also you will find (doubtless in greater number) pictures of beautiful girls, some of them with a minimum of clothing, and obviously posed in such a way as to make a play for the attention of the sex-conscious male.

Criticism of the pin-up type of art is usually met in some quarters with the counter accusation that the critic is an old puritan, and his attitude proves that the Catholic Church is opposed to sex, and thinks that sex is something shameful and sinful.

The Catholic Church thinks nothing of the kind. She recognizes that sex has been created by God, and used according to God's law, has His full blessing upon it. But she recognizes also the self-evident fact that the sex-drive, being a very strong force, must be kept within due bounds, otherwise like a flooding river, it can damage and destroy everything in its path.

For this reason pictures of naked or almost naked women on calendars or anywhere else can be a source of serious temptation, depending of course on the type of picture and the kind of man who looks at it. To flaunt such pictures before all and sundry is to give scandal, in the classical use of the word. It is to run the danger of leading others into sin. Christ had some pretty harsh words about the scandal-giver:

"If any man scandalize one of these my little ones, it were better for that man if a mill-stone were tied around his neck and he were drowned in the depths of the sea."

We mention this because Catholics can sometimes develop a blind spot in this regard. We have been in stores and barber-shops run by Catholics where the calendar art was quite un-

inhibited, to say the least.

By no means are we contending that our readers should become prudish. We do contend that there is a definite obligation for them to be prudent.

Executions

The country has been witnessing the distressing sight in the past year of highly publicized executions — first that of the atomic spies, and more recently that of the Kansas City kidnapers.

Highly publicized executions are to be depreciated. No purpose is served in describing in great detail electric chairs and gas chambers, every move of the condemned as time pushes them inexorably towards their fate, and the scene itself as the switch is pulled or the pellets dropped into the acid to the accompaniment of twitching muscles and straining bodies.

It is true that some people may be frightened into goodness by being told exactly what will happen to them if they are not good. But more people, it seems, are led on by morbid curiosity actually to enjoy the morbid and gruesome tragedy of lives gone wrong and now ending in disgrace.

If this is not so, why do so many people (boys and girls amongst them) crowd the chambers where such trials are held, and read with great avidity the accounts in the newspapers of those parts of the sad business that they were unable to witness with their eyes? The motive could hardly be a strong desire to see justice done.

If wide publicity for the punishing of criminals is the best preventive against crime, why not have the executions in Yankee Stadium or in Soldiers' Field? Let thousands view the price that society demands of those who would raise their hand in an effort to destroy society by murder or by kid-

napping.

Obviously public executions of this kind do not have public approval. Yet, there is little difference between letting everybody *watch* a man die in disgrace, and letting everybody *read about* a man dying in disgrace. In fact, the latter can be more sensational than the former. A reporter can report details that would be missed by the spectator.

It is good that the public be told by the newspapers that a man was made to pay for his crime. But that should be enough. There is no point in drenching minds with further pourings of sensationalism that are already heavily soaked in the ugly effluvia of life by crime fiction, radio and television. If society has a hard duty to do, let society do it quickly and with mercy. But let society keep away the curiosity, seekers. That also is a duty.

Valentine Day

Valentine day is in February instead of in June (when supposedly love is at its height and when most marriages take place) because St. Valentine was martyred in February. The Church has always celebrated the day a man went to heaven, and not the day a man came to earth. The former is so much more important than the latter.

There are two significant facts about Valentine day.

The first is the strange fact that the modern secularistic world has difficulty in casting off the traces of its Christian heritage. If any man was a real *Roman Catholic* (the enemies of the Church love to throw in that word *Roman* every chance they have, as though there were other Catholic Churches in the world and the *Roman Catholic Church* were only one particular aspect of Catholicism in general), it was Valentine. He believed in the

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Mass and in the seven sacraments. He practiced devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to the saints, and he was not ashamed of it. He died in defense of the principles and doctrines of the Roman Catholic religion.

Yet, came the 14th of February, and the opponents of Roman Catholicism will take Valentine to their heart as though he were one of themselves. They would not allow themselves to be found dead in the company of one of their contemporaries who happened to hold the same faith as Valentine; but they have no qualms at all in being found very much alive in the spirit, if not in the company, of Valentine on St. Valentine day. They cannot seem to get rid of that religion which causes them so much disgust and hatred. It keeps coming back when they least expect it.

The second significant fact about Valentine day is this that it points up the importance of love. Valentine cards are symbols of love.

The Catholic Church has always held that the ability to love is one of the most beautiful and wonderful gifts

that God gave to man. But the Catholic Church has always been quite clear on what true love is. It is not merely sex and passion. It is not merely physical attraction. It is not merely feeling and thrills. It is not merely intellectual companionship or platonic friendship. It is not merely biological urge.

It is all these things bound together into a spiritual and physical composite of selflessness, self-sacrifice, fidelity and devotion in regard to a man or a woman that has the power of lasting until death. It is a union of two persons in mind, heart and body, so that they think and act as one person. It is allowed its consummation and its fruition only under the protecting walls of marriage. It can help a man and a woman more easily to go to heaven.

Love is not forbidden by the Catholic Church any more than it is forbidden by God. It is only controlled by the Catholic Church even as it is controlled by God. Under this control and only under this control can it bring to a person a fore-taste of heaven.

Clear Title

A Louisiana lawyer was trying to procure an R.F.C. loan for a client. The only collateral the client had was a piece of property near New Orleans. The lawyer was told that the loan would be granted if the title to the property was cleared back to 1803. After much research, he was informed that he would have to clear the title prior to 1803.

At this point, the R.F.C. received the following letter from the lawyer:
"Gentlemen:

I thought that any educated man knew that Louisiana was purchased from France in 1803. France acquired Louisiana by right of conquest from Spain, and Spain acquired the title by right of discovery of Christopher Columbus in 1492. The voyage of Columbus was financed by Queen Isabella of Spain, who, being a devout Catholic, invoked the blessing of the Pope on the voyage; the Pope, as anyone knows, is the vicar of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And God created the world out of nothing including that small piece of earth which my client owns down in Louisiana."

The Grail



Liguoriana



EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ST. ALPHONSUS

Selected and Edited by John Schaefer

MARTYRS OF JAPAN (Continued)

The year 1627 was one of horror and, at the same time, of glory for the Christians of the kingdom of Arima. Wishing to clear himself of any taint of appeasing the Christians, the governor set himself to a campaign of wholesale cruelty. The following are but a few examples of his refinements of torture and the Christians' glorious and heroic conquests over pain and torment.

Paul Uchibori, a wealthy young cavalier, who had previously been imprisoned for giving shelter to the missionaries, was now brought forward together with his three young sons. Seeking to intimidate the father, the governor asked him which fingers of his eldest son, Anthony, he wished to have cut off. Paul answered that this was no concern of his. The tyrant then ordered that three fingers of each hand should be severed. The boy at once extended his hand and fearlessly suffered the torture. When his brother, Baltasar, saw him in this state, he exclaimed;

"O my brother! How beautiful appear to me the hands which have been thus mutilated for the glory of Jesus Christ."

He, too, presented his hands to the executioner, who cut each finger several times. The third son, Ignatius, was but five years old. But on seeing the executioner approach armed with his knife, he also stretched forth his little hand. The barbarian cut off his first finger and held it up before his eyes. He then cut off one finger of the other hand; but during all this, the lad did

not utter the slightest complaint.

After these tortures they were transported to the sea along with other Christians. Here they were plunged into the water at different times, then drawn back into the vessel. Those who persevered were finally thrown into the sea with a stone about their neck. Several Christians, however, were overcome by the cold and apostatized. Thus did the valiant Paul see three of his children drowned in the sea and was eagerly awaiting the moment when he might join them in glory. But he was disappointed and brought back to shore along with the rest of the faithful.

Here their faces were burned with red-hot irons and their fingers cut off. During these torments Paul encouraged his companions to suffer all with firmness. After they had been thus mutilated and disfigured, they were set at liberty. Paul himself fainted as a result of his great loss of blood. When he revived he related that he had seen his children and that he had received consolation and encouragement from them. He then retired to a small house where he lived in extreme poverty, awaiting his expected execution.

The martyrs, however, did not long enjoy their liberty. The governor was resolved to make them die a most cruel death. He, therefore, ordered them to return to prison, and they joyfully obeyed.

Two leagues from Nagasaki there is a high and steep mountain called Mount Ungen. Its summit is divided by three or four deep abysses, full of

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sulphurous waters which subterranean fires keep constantly boiling. The flaming waters, which the Japanese call, "infernal waters," are cast up from the depths through large openings called the "mouths of hell." The waters are seen to boil, as though they had been placed over a flaming fire, and they pour down the side of the mountain with a great noise, and form boiling lakes in different places. In these lakes they preserve such tremendous heat that as soon as they touch the flesh they penetrate to the very bones. It was to this mountain that the condemned, sixteen in number, were conducted on February 28th, that they might be cast into the abyss.

Among these Christians was the heroic Paul Uchibori. They set out on horseback, singing on the way the praises of God. When they arrived at the summit and looked down into the frightful abyss, they remained undismayed. On the contrary, Paul and Mary, the wife of Joachim Minesuiedai, the only woman among the condemned, intoned the "*Laudate Dominum omnes gentes*." After their prayer, Paul spoke to the idolators, explaining that there was only one God, for the love of whom he and his companions were sacrificing their lives. He, then, exhorted his brethren, encouraging them to submit to martyrdom. They were conducted to the brink of the precipice, stripped of their clothing and a rope passed under their arms that they might be plunged into the abyss and withdrawn at will.

The first to receive the palm in the "infernal waters" was Louis Xinsaburo. He was commanded to throw himself into the gulf. Fortified by the spirit of God, he made the sign of the cross, invoked the names of Jesus and Mary, and threw himself into the abyss without fear, thus consummating his mar-

tyrdom. Paul, however, explained to the others that it was not permitted to throw one's self into the gulf voluntarily. At this, the executioners seized them, one after the other, and threw them into the burning waters, so that they could be seen swimming about for an instant and then expiring. Paul was to be the last. In his case, the ropes were fastened to his feet, and he was plunged head first into the waters, then drawn out half dead. This was repeated the second time, granting him occasion to exclaim: "Praised be the Most Blessed Sacrament." Finally, he was made to perish in the abyss. Thus did he obtain his immortal crown, after suffering so many torments for the faith.

After using every effort to seduce the men, the governor now undertook to pervert the women. Among them was one, named Magdalen, the wife of Leonard Massudadeuzo. When her hand was forcibly held to make her inscribe her name on the list of renegades, she struck the register with a powerful blow, exclaiming that she would never obey the ministers of satan. Enraged at such an insult, the judges beat her cruelly, sent her back to prison, and later conducted her to the sea.

On the way, she met her brother, Caspar, and wished to bid him farewell. The guards, however, seized upon him also, bound him and took him with her. When they were out on the sea, they asked Caspar to inscribe her name on the register.

"God forbid that I should commit such a crime," exclaimed the young man. "I would rather encourage my sister to die for the faith."

The guards were on the point of throwing him into the sea, but hesitated, since they had received no orders to that effect. Instead, they turned their

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attentions to his sister, Magdalen, commanding her either to renounce her religion or to cast herself into the sea. The pious woman replied:

"It is in vain that you command me to abandon my faith, for all the torments of the world could never make me abandon my faith. As for throwing myself into the sea, do it yourselves. I am ready to die, but I must not cause my own death."

Upon this declaration her hands and feet were tied and she was plunged into the water four times. When her constancy had been thus tested, she was thrown into the sea with a stone fastened to her neck, and it was thus that she gained the victory.

Informed that the waters of the sea could not shake the constancy of the prisoners, the governor again condemned ten Christians, eight men and two women, to the "infernal fires." Upon hearing this the servants of God spent the whole night in prayer. On the following day, when they arrived at the summit of Mt. Ungen, they prostrated themselves on the ground to honor the place of their martyrdom. One of them, Paul Mofioie, embracing his father, exclaimed:

"What thanks shall we render to God for the honor that he confers upon us to die together for his glory?"

Paul was the first to be lowered into the abyss. He was soon withdrawn to see whether he would surrender. But, since he was about to expire and did not answer, a large quantity of the burning water was thrown upon him, and he was thus deprived of life. The executioners then turned their attentions to the courageous Joachim Suquidaia. They first made him experience the painful effects of the "infernal waters." Then, witnessing his constancy, they opened his sides in different places with blows of a knife and pour-

ed the horrible liquid into his wounds. Joachim, however, remained unshaken until his last breath.

After him it was John Chizaburo's turn. A pagan who wished to save him led him aside, and after conversing with him for a few moments, informed the judge that John had submitted. Aware of the trick, however, John cried out that he wished to live and die a Christian. In his anger, the judge ordered that his sides should be cut open and the burning water poured into his wounds. During this torture, the servant of God did not cease to cry out: "My Jesus, do not remove Thy presence from me!" The executioners, finally, became so fatigued that they bound the other prisoners together and poured upon them such a quantity of the poisonous liquid that they soon expired. Their bodies were so disfigured that they seemed to have been flayed alive. This execution took place during the month of May.

There yet remained in prison a faithful soldier of Jesus Christ. It was Leonard Massudadenzo, the husband of the courageous Magdalen mentioned previously. He had been accused of theft, a crime of which he was declared innocent. The governor offered him his liberty on condition that he would renounce Jesus Christ. Leonard replied that he would not abandon his faith, even though he were forced to endure all the evils of the world. At these words the tyrant had him brought before him, and seizing a hammer in his rage, he crushed all the fingers of one hand, one after another, asking him at each blow whether he persisted in his refusal. The holy martyr was then returned to prison.

On another day he was forced to swallow a large quantity of water. When he was gorged with it, he was stretched on the ground, where one of

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the executioners stood upon his abdomen, trampling upon it with his feet, forcing him to vomit forth the water, which poured from his mouth, nose and eyes along with quantities of blood. He was then placed on a ladder, on which he was violently drawn with ropes attached to his hands and feet. The servant of God later related that during these torments he was consoled by the apparition of his wife, Magdalen, and that she encouraged him saying: "Leonard, be faithful to God."

Unable to shake his constancy, the governor sent him back to prison. Here

Leonard spent several months, fasting three times a week, wearing hair-cloth, and scourging himself with the discipline in order to obtain the grace of martyrdom, of which he believed himself deprived because of his sins. In prison he baptized an idolator, converted two apostates, and encouraged all the faithful to suffer for Jesus Christ. The Lord finally heard his prayer and his desire to die as a martyr for the faith. He was condemned to be beheaded. It was thus that he consummated his sacrifice on December 13th, 1627.

Tips Too

If you are thinking of moving to New York, you might profitably first check the following figures against the corresponding ones in your home-town restaurants. One of the *Forbes Magazine* editors jotted them down in a widely-known New York restaurant:

Lobster — \$4.50
Pork Chops — \$2.25
Bacon and Eggs — \$2.00
Calf's Liver — \$2.50
Apple Pie — 40c
Baked Apple — 50c
Cup Coffee — 25c

Lettuce Salad — 50c
Sirloin Steak — \$5.50
Minute Steak — \$4.25
Hamburger Steak — \$2.50
Filet Mignon — \$6.00
Baked Potato — 40c
Spinach — 50c
Asparagus Tips — 75c

Biblical

A good lady residing in the Bible belt of the nation, so we are told, brought her child to a minister to be baptized. This was her fourth child, and she had found appropriate names in the Bible for the previous three: Esther, David and Solomon.

"This one," she told the minister, "I want him called Pizlem Civ."

"What's that?" queried the worthy gentleman.

"Pizlem Civ," repeated the lady. "It's in the Bible."

"Where?" said the minister. "Show me where in this Bible."

"Right here," said the lady, pointing to Psalm CIV.

Choosy

He'd have the best and that was none too good;

 No barrier could hold before his terms.

He lies below, correct in cypress wood,

 And entertains the most exclusive worms.

Death and Taxes

BOOK LOVERS DEPARTMENT



Conducted by Thomas Tobin

Georges Bernanos, 1888-1948
Catholic Novelist

I. Life:

Georges Bernanos was born in Paris, France, on February 20th, 1888, but was raised in an old estate in the country. He was educated by the Jesuit Fathers at Vaugirard College where he was a classmate of General de Gaulle. Later on Bernanos attended the Catholic Institute and the University of Paris, and he received the degree of licentiate in both law and letters from the latter University. During the first world war he served as a corporal in the French cavalry and won the *Croix de Guerre*. In 1917 Bernanos married a member of an old French family that claims kindred with Joan of Arc. Six children, three sons and three daughters, blessed their marriage. In 1936 the Bernanos family lived at Palma in the Balearic Islands, but returned to France for a short time in 1937. The family moved first to Paraguay, then Brazil in 1938. After eight years in South America, they returned to France in 1946. Two years later, in 1948, George Bernanos ended his turbulent career in the American hospital at Nevilly, France.

II. Writings:

Georges Bernanos had reached such stature as an author that *Time Magazine* could say of him in 1946: "Georges Bernanos is France's most distinguished Catholic author and his own Church's sharpest critic." It took Bernanos just eighteen years to obtain this position, as his first book was not published until he was forty years old. Bernanos is a controversial writer about

whom there are violent differences of opinion. Like so many of his contemporaries, notably Graham Greene in England, he is preoccupied with the problem of evil in the lives of men, and especially with the prince of darkness. He once told an interviewer: "I have seen the devil, as I see you, since my childhood." He is profoundly pessimistic, as can be seen from his statement: "I began to write to try to escape from this disgusting era." He is ruthlessly critical of his fellow-Catholics, as he avows, to awaken them to their great responsibilities. Bernanos is morbidly psychological in his pen probings of the souls of his characters.

A number of his books have been translated into English. *Diary of My Times* is a violent attack upon Catholics for supporting Franco. *Under the Sun of Satan* is a grimly realistic story of a priest who has the power of seeing souls as God sees them. *Ivy* is a penetrating character study in which Bernanos reveals his intemperate hatred for mediocrity.

III. The Book:

Bernanos's best known book to American readers is *The Diary of A Country Priest*, for which he received the Grand Prize of the French Academy. It is a psychological narrative of the gropings, desires, and frustrations of the pastor of a small parish. Evident in it is the best and worst of Bernanos, the psychological ability, the literary skill, the morbid pessimism and the Jansenistic attitude toward life.

FEBRUARY BOOK REVIEWS

TRAPPISTS AND CISTERCIANS

The Less Traveled Road. By Rev. M. Raymond, O.C.S.O. 250 pp. Milwaukee, Wis.; Bruce Publishing Co. \$3.50.

The White Monks. By Rev. Louis J. Lekai, S.O.Cist. 328 pp. Okauchee, Wis.; Cistercian Fathers. \$4.75.

These two books are part of the history of the Trappists and the Cistercians. It might be well to note that the Trappists are Cistercians of the Strict Observance and those religious commonly called Cistercians are Cistercians of the Common Observance. The Trappists are the better known in America, although the Cistercians have several houses in the United States.

From the talented pen of Father Raymond comes his latest book, *The Less Traveled Road*, a memoir of Dom Mary Frederic Dunne, the first American Trappist abbot at Gethsemani. At the age of twenty Frederic Dunne came to the comparatively unknown monastery of Gethsemani with only a few aged monks from Europe vainly trying to plant a vigorous growth of Trappist asceticism in the Kentucky hills. Fifty-four years later, at the death of Abbot Dunne, Gethsemani had mothered four daughter foundations and the motherhouse was filled to overflowing. Under the grace of God history can say that Abbot Dunne was responsible for this. Shortly after his ordination he was chosen Prior by Abbot Edmond Obrecht and had to govern the monastery during the long absences of this much-traveled abbot. In 1935 his monks elected Dom Frederic as the successor of Abbot Obrecht. Father Raymond, with his knack for dramatization, has written another of his well known fictionalized biographies. For those who relish the dramatic and the imaginative this new work will be another treat. There is no denying Father Raymond's great ability to catch the mood of a situation and to captivate the reader's attention.

The White Monks tells the less known

history of the Cistercians of the Common Observance. The author, Father Louis J. Lekai, assistant professor of history at Canisius College, has divided his treatment into two sections. Part I consists of a historical survey of Cistercian monasticism down to the twentieth century with a few pages on American foundations. Part II is devoted to Cistercian culture with chapters on spirituality, learning, liturgy, art, and economy. The appendices give some of the important Cistercian documents. The story is well told and will interest students of religious history.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION

General Education and the Liberal College.

By Rev. William F. Cunningham, C.S.C. 286 pp. St. Louis, Mo.; B. Herder Co. \$4.00.

Are We Really Teaching Religion. By F. J. Sheed. 35 pp. New York, N. Y.; Sheed and Ward. \$7.75.

General Education and the Liberal College is the product of long study by Father William Cunningham of Notre Dame University. The spark that started the study was Robert Maynard Hutchins's blast against Catholic Colleges for imitating the worst features of public universities. The result of Father Cunningham's research is this well rounded expression of the philosophy of a Catholic College. Part I deals with educational goals; Part II treats the curriculum; Part III discusses method and administration. The professional educator and the educated layman will find *General Education and the Liberal College* a penetrating and comprehensive study of the function of a Catholic College.

Several summers ago F. J. Sheed was asked to address a conference of teaching sisters in Dublin on the subject "Are we really teaching religion?". The talk was well received and a number of inquiries led him to publish the talk together with some additional material. The main section

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is a fervent plea for instilling a solid knowledge and love of God, Christ and the Church. The second chapter contains explanations of certain key doctrines, spirit, God, man, Christ, union and mystery. From his many years of experience in the Catholic Evidence Guild Mr. Sheed knows both the weakness of much of our religious instruction and the proper method to explain Catholic truths to others. This is a thought-provoking book for the teacher and for parents.

PARIS PRIEST

Rue Notre Dame. By Daniel Pezeril. Introduction by Bruce Marshall. 148 pp. New York, N. Y.; Sheed and Ward. \$2.50.

Rue Notre Dame is another book that has come from the notable experiment of some French Catholic priests who took

off their cassocks and lived as workers among the poor. We in America could not realize how few French working men and women even attended Mass on Sundays. Daniel Pezeril has written in diary form the transformation of a priest retired to a canon's stall in Paris. The old Canon is gradually changed from his spirit of indifference by the influence of a young worker-priest who chooses him as his confessor. This is well written and is very penetrating in its insight at times. The recent papal restrictions on the worker priests manifest that the Church is a bit reserved in its judgment about the prudence of such a plan, but the sincerity and zeal of the worker-priests is not questioned. Bruce Marshall, who writes the preface, tells us that he read the book twice and thought it "amazingly good."

BEST SELLERS

A Moral Evaluation of Current Books, Published at the University of Scranton, Pa.
I. Suitable for general reading:

A Fair Wind Home—*Moore*
 A Handful of Authors—*Chesterton*
 The Catholic Church and the American Idea—*Maynard*
 The Lady of Arlington—*Kane*
 Nun in Red China—*Victoria*
 Yankee Stranger—*Thane*
 Hue and Cry—*Yates*
 The Mouse Hunter—*Hasley*
 How to Stop Worrying and Start Living—*Gallico*
 So Long as Love Remembers—*Janney*
 The Spirit of St. Louis—*Lindbergh*
 Hornblower and the Atropos—*Forester*
 Blind Journey—*Lancaster*
 Famous Humanitarians—*Stevens*
 Caves of Adventure—*Tazieff*
 Icebound Summer—*Carrigher*
 A Passage in the Night—*Asch*
 The Age of the Moguls—*Holbrook*
 Ben Jonson of Westminster—*Chute*
 My Heart Lies South—*de Trevino*
 Madeline Grown Up: the Autobiography

of a French Girl—*Henrey*
 Jungle Lore—*Corbett*
 The Flower of May—*O'Brien*
 Room at the Inn—*Clark*
 The Black Star Passes—*Campbell*
 Silver Rock—*Short*
 Set All Afire—*De Wohl*
 The Man Who Wouldn't Talk—*Reynolds*
 Undersea Patrol—*Young*
 The Valiant Virginians—*Bellah*
 The Whiteoak Brothers: Jalna-1923—*De La Roche*

II. Suitable only for adults:

A. Because of advanced style and contents:
 One—*Karp*
 The Statesmanship of the Civil War—*Nevins*
 Until Victory—*Tharp*
 Bring the Jubilee—*Moore*
 The Life of Archbishop John Ireland—*Moynihan*
 The Dark Island—*Treece*
 Let's Talk Sense About Schools—*Woodring*

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- The Arab World—Past, Present and Future—*Izzeddin*
 The Heart of the Family—*Goudge*
 Rue Notre Dame—*Pezeril*
 Love Is A Bridge—*Flood*
 Three Great Irishmen—*Ussher*
 Choir of Muses—*Gilson*
 Theology: Vol. II Christ Our High Priest—*Fernan*
 Stella—*de Hartog*
 Reflections on Life—*Carrell*
 An Autumn in Italy—*O'Faolain*
 The Sounding Brass—*Latham*
 The Economic Thoughts of Monsignor John A. Ryan—*Gearty*
 India and the Awakening East—*Roosevelt*
 Fruit of an Impulse—*Savage*
 Fire in the Ashes—*White*
 The Four Lives of Mundy Tolliver—*Burnam*
 Mary Tudor—*Prescott*
 The Shadows of the Images—*Barrett*
 Life is Worth Living—*Sheen*
 Hilaire Belloc: No Alienated Man—*Wilhelmsen*
 New Poems by American Poets—*Humphries*
 Norms for the Novel—*Gardiner*
 Peter E. Dietz, Labor Priest—*Fox*
 The Best Humor from Punch—*Cole*
 Hitler's Defeat in Russia—*Anders*
 The Secret War for the A-Bomb—*Evans*
 The New Treasure Chest—*Adams*
 Doctor Pygmalion—*Maltz*
 Vermont Tradition—*Fisher*
 Tigreiro!—*Siemel*
 Unconditional Hatred—*Grenfell*
 Circle of the Seasons—*Teale*
 Quackery in the Public Schools—*Lynd*
 Apple on a Pear Tree—*Burruss*
 Captain Marooner—*Davidson*
 The Southerners—*Lee*
 Bring on the Girls—*Wodehouse*
- B. Because of immoral incidents which do not, however, invalidate the book as a whole:**
- The Lie—*Goodin*
 The Female—*Wellman*
 The Third Angel—*Weidman*
 The Sands of Karakorum—*Ullman*
 Matthew Steel—*McNeilly*
 Eagle in the Sky—*Mason*
 Matador—Conrad Loser's Choice—*Todd*
 Come, My Beloved—*Buck*
 Lord Vanity—*Shellabarger*
 The Enchanted Cup—*Roberts*
 Look Who's Abroad Now—*Wilson*
 Assignment in Eternity—*Heinlein*
 The Young People—*Schweitzer*
 Vagrant Viking: My Life and Adventures—*Feruchen*
 The Marmot Drive—*Hersey*
 Lincoln McKeever—*Lipsky*
 The Lights in the Sky are Stars—*Brown*
 The Trembling Earth—*Van Every*
- III. Permissible for the discriminating reader:**
- The Passionate Heart—*Beck*
 Sexual Behavior in the Human Female—*Kinsey*
 Canal Town—*Adams*
 God's Men—*Buck*
 Nothing Is Quite Enough—*MacEoin*
 The Story of Axel Munthe—*Munthe*
 Out of These Roots—*Meyer*
 The Face of Time—*Farrell*
 Lelia; the Life of George Sand—*Maurois*
- IV. Not recommended to any reader**
- The Devil's Laughter—*Yerby*
 Adam's Way—*Coleman*
 A Sunset Touch—*Spring*
 The Adventures of Augie March—*Bellow*
 Journey to Bethlehem—*Lovelace*
 The Christianity of Sholem Asch—*Lieberman*
 Search for the Sun—*Furcolowe*
 Broadway Heartbeat—*Sobel*
 Christian Realism and Political Problems—*Niebuhr*



Lucid Intervals

Two men were working on the White House lawn, picking up papers with a long spear. Just as one started to spear a piece of tissue a gust of wind blew the paper through an open window and into the White House.

The frantic man rushed into the building, but soon returned empty-handed. "I was too late. He had already signed it."

The clergyman was preparing his sermon and his little daughter was watching him.

"Daddy," she asked, "does God tell you what to say?"

"Of course, child," the father answered. "Why do you ask?"

"Oh," said the little girl, "then why do you scratch some of it out?"

Tommy was being examined in the catechism by the visiting minister. "What is regeneration?" asked the divine. "Why it's just being born again," replied Tommy. "And would you like to be born again?" No reply to this even under parental pressure until in final desperation Tommy declared: "I ain't taking no chance on being a girl."

Once upon a time there was an Indian named Big Smoke, employed as a missionary to his fellow Smokes.

A white man encountering Big Smoke, asked him what he did for a living.

"Umph!" said Big Smoke, "me preach."

"That so? What you get for preaching?"

"Me get ten dollars a year."

"Well," said the white man, "that's poor pay."

"Umph!" said Big Smoke, "me poor preacher."

A man fell from a six-story window to the sidewalk. A crowd quickly gathered and a cop hustled up and asked him the cause of the excitement. "I don't know," he admitted, "I just got here!"

"The fine is ten dollars for speeding," pronounced the weary judge.

"Your Honor," the defendant pleaded, "times are hard; can't you reduce that a little?"

"What's your business?" the judge inquired.

"I run a small dry goods store," the prisoner replied.

"Let's mark it down," agreed the judge. "Today only, \$9.95."

Eleanor, my four-year-old niece, was discovered misbehaving in the kindergarten ranks. The teacher told her to go to the end of the line. But a few minutes later she discovered Eleanor was back in her original place.

"Little girl, I thought I told you to go to the end of the line," she said sternly.

"I did, teacher, but there was someone there already."

The visitor from across the mountain leaned on the rail fence, watching his old friend plow.

"I don't like to butt in," he said finally, "but you could save yourself a lot of work by saying 'gee' and 'haw' to that mule instead of just tugging on those lines."

The old-timer pulled a big handkerchief from his pocket and mopped his brow. "Yep," he agreed, "I know that. But this son-of-a-gun kicked me six years ago and I ain't spoke to him since."

Amongst Ourselves

A few little changes in the cover and arrangement of articles appear in this month's *LIGUORIAN*. These changes, we believe, are not great enough to disturb the hundreds of readers who have written to beseech us not to change *THE LIGUORIAN* at all, above all, never to admit advertising and pictures into its pages. We shall stand by our principles on these points forever. At the same time, however, the minor changes are intended to make titles of articles stand out more attractively, and to make the process of reading a little easier on the eyes.

The first pointed paragraph in this issue states the truth that it is readers of worthwhile publications who can do the most to achieve the purposes of the national observance of Catholic Press Month. We say this not as something new or unusual. We know by experience that it is the only effective way in which the habit of good reading can be spread. A tremendous number of the subscribers to *THE LIGUORIAN* first became acquainted with it through the word-of-mouth comments on it made by their friends, or through receiving a subscription as a gift on the occasion of Christmas, or of their birthday, or

their wedding. Many of these have in turn become spokesmen for the value of *THE LIGUORIAN* to their relatives and friends. We hope the process will long continue, and that it will be especially stepped up during the month dedicated to the spread of good Catholic reading.

It is not only, however, by actually advising others to take *THE LIGUORIAN*, or by presenting them with subscriptions as a gift, that the good work is done. It can be done silently. *LIGUORIANS* left in hotel lobbies, in railroad stations, in trains and busses, often bring us requests for subscriptions. Many readers do not care to part with their copies in this way, because they prefer to keep them for future reference. (We have handy, hard-cover binders in which a year's copies can easily be inserted, that such readers can purchase from us for \$2.50.) But even such as these might now and then buy an extra copy from a pamphlet rack and deposit it in some public place where strangers might happen to pick it up. Every little bit helps, when the goal is to bring every creature to a knowledge of Christ and the truth about Him that saves immortal souls.

Please notify us promptly of your change of address, giving both your old and new address. It makes it easy for our office if you cut your stenciled address from the rear cover of one of your issues of *The Liguorian* and send it in when asking for a change of address. Notify us by the tenth of the month if your copy for that month has not been delivered.

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How To Make New Readers

Here are some tips on how anyone who enjoys and profits by reading *The Liguorian* (or any other Catholic publication) can help in a small way to make Catholic Press Month a successful observance.

1. Talk about *The Liguorian* (or your favorite Catholic magazine) to somebody who has never heard of it, or never seen it.

2. Talk about a particular article in *The Liguorian* (or any Catholic magazine) that cleared up problems or doubts that had worried you for a long time.

3. Pass on your copy of *The Liguorian* (or another Catholic magazine) to somebody else, with a special comment on a certain article that person should read.

4. Make a present of a year's subscription to *The Liguorian* to a friend whose interest in it you have aroused.

PRESS MONTH SUBSCRIPTION

(A one-year subscription costs \$2.00 in the U.S., \$2.25 in Canada and foreign countries; a three-year subscription costs \$5.00 in the U.S., \$6.00 in Canada and foreign countries; three one-year subscriptions can be had for \$5.00 in the U.S., \$6.00 in Canada and foreign countries.)

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